



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

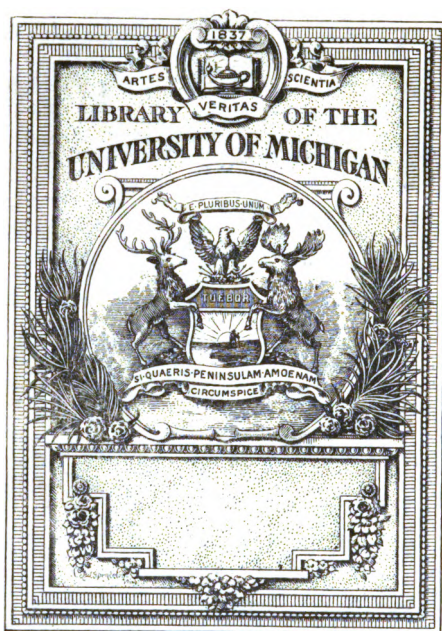
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





THIS BOOK  
FORMS PART OF THE  
ORIGINAL LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
BOUGHT IN EUROPE  
1838 TO 1839  
BY  
ASA GRAY

DD

414

. S453



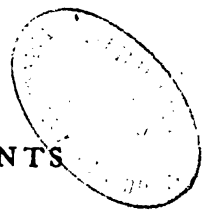
**FREDERIC-WILLIAM II.**

**King of Prussia**

*London Published Jan<sup>y</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> 1801 by Mess<sup>rs</sup> Longman & Rees Paternoster Row.*

4123  
9003

2- 258



HISTORY  
OF  
THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS  
OF  
THE REIGN  
OF  
**FREDERIC WILLIAM II.**  
*KING OF PRUSSIA;*

AND

A POLITICAL PICTURE OF EUROPE,  
FROM 1786 to 1796.

CONTAINING A SUMMARY OF THE  
*REVOLUTIONS*

OF

BRABANT, HOLLAND, POLAND, AND FRANCE.  
IN THREE VOLUMES.

By *Louis Philippe* **L. P. SEGUR, the Elder,**

FORMERLY AMBASSADOR OF LOUIS XVI. AT ST. PETERSBURG, BERLIN,  
AND VIENNA.

“ Quod verum atque decens curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum.”  
HOR.

*TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.*

VOL. I.

LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR T. LONGMAN AND O. REES, PATERNOSTER-  
ROW;  
BY G. WOODFALL, PATERNOSTER-ROW,

1801.



THE  
TRANSLATOR's PREFACE.

---

THE many important and extraordinary changes which have, within the last twenty years, taken place in several of the principal Governments in the world, naturally lead the thinking mind to ruminate on occurrences of such magnitude with the solemnity they merit, and, at the same time, excite an almost uncontrollable curiosity and desire to develop, if possible, the latent sources from which have arisen causes capable of producing effects so wonderful.

In contemplating the French Revolution alone, the recollection of the vast change it has occasioned fills us with astonishment. We can scarcely refrain from fancying it a dream, when we reflect,

#### IV TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

flect, that, within half the period already mentioned, the unrivalled splendour and magnificence of the family of the unhappy Louis XVI., whose ancestors had, for ages, reigned over the first kingdom in Europe, the boasted titles and long established privileges of the *Noblesse*, and the sacred functions and ample revenues of the Clergy, have been suddenly annihilated.

Numerous accounts have been published of this Revolution, either by French writers, who were too deeply engaged in the scene, to preserve the impartiality requisite in a historian, or by English authors, male and female, (for both have written on the subject), who, having been present during the period of the Revolution, have communicated to the world the circumstances of that great event, but who, it is evident, have, in many material particulars, drawn their conclusions from grounds of which they could never penetrate beyond the surface. Without questioning the candour or veracity of these narratives, still it has been our wish that some Frenchman  
of

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

of talent, and in a situation that might enable him to attain the highest and most authentic sources of information, would give a faithful picture of those awful events, and their tremendous consequences, which have astounded the firmest minds, and baffled all political calculations.

At the first glance of the title-page of *The History of the Reign of FREDERIC WILLIAM II. King of Prussia*, a reign truly insignificant and almost contemptible, when compared with that of his predecessor, we had nearly thrown aside the book, as unworthy of attention. We, however, soon perceived, that it also embraced the Revolutions of *Brabant, Holland, Poland, and France*, and contained a Sketch of the Life of FREDERIC THE GREAT; and we saw, with pleasure, that it proceeded from the classic pen of the *çi-devant* COUNT DE SE'GUR.

The literary talents of this gentleman are so universally known, as to require no eulogy from us; and with regard to his political abilities, we deem it necessary to

give only a general idea of the information that may be expected from one, who had held the first diplomatic employments, with no less advantage to his Sovereign and Country, than satisfaction to the Courts at which he resided.

He was, for several years, Ambassador at St. Petersburg, where, by the brilliancy of his wit and the amenity of his manners, he obtained a distinguished place in the good opinion of Catherine II., whose luminous mind soon discovered his virtues and talents, and held him in such esteem that he generally made one in her parties. During his stay there he composed several pieces for the Stage, which were performed before the Empress at the *Theatre d'Hermitage*, and received the warmest approbation of the audience, and of that Princess, who was herself a dramatic writer of no inconsiderable genius and taste.

At the same time, he was so attentive to the interests of his Court, and so well fulfilled his important mission, that he was enabled

enabled to transmit to the Cabinet of Versailles intelligence of every treaty that was entered into, or was on the tapis, in all the Courts of Europe, during his embassy to Russia. Such was his diplomatic skill, that he effected a treaty of commerce between the two nations, which the French Court had long been endeavouring to obtain, and which he had the satisfaction to conclude in 1787.

Our author was next appointed Ambassador at the Court of Berlin, where he arrived immediately after the death of Frederic the Great, to congratulate Frederic William II. on his accession. Here he resided several years, and became completely master of the intrigues and political transactions which were then passing in Europe. In a word, he dexterously contrived to obtain a key to all the Cabinets; and their *arcana* are most ably developed in this history.

The last mission on which he was employed was as Ambassador to the Court of Vienna, for the purpose of preventing, if

practicable, the interference of the Emperor of Germany, and the King of Prussia, in the internal affairs of France; and prevailing with those two Courts to prohibit the French Princes, and the rest of the Emigrants, from arming in their dominions, or in those of the other States of Germany. This was the only occasion in which he was unsuccessful. The die was cast; the Monarchs had taken their determination. Ségur returned to Paris after this fruitless attempt, and has since conducted himself with such prudence, wisdom, and virtue, as to acquire and retain the respect of the various factions, which have succeeded each other with unexampled rapidity; and he has lately been returned a Member of the Legislative Body, under the splendid Administration of BONAPARTE.

Of the merits of the translation it is for the public to judge; but we hope we may be permitted to say, that, avoiding Gallicisms, we have adhered with due

fidelity to the original, without losing sight of its elegance and energy.

Our readers will observe, in the following pages, a deviation from the usual orthography of Russian proper names; for instance, *Otchakof*, instead of what has been commonly written *Oczakow*; *Khotyim*, *Chocsim*; *Suvarof*, *Suwarrow*; *Bulgakof*, *Bulgakow*; *Romantzof*, *Romanzow*; *Razumofski*, *Razumowski*; *Mosco*, *Moscow*; *Kief*, *Kiow*; *Krimea*, for *Crimea*, &c. In these alterations we have followed the authority of two valuable works,—*The Life of Catherine II.* and *The History of Russia*, by the Rev. W. TOOKE, who resided several years in that country, as Chaplain to the English Embassy.

*London, March 31, 1801.*

TH



THE  
AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

---

*HISTORY* frequently presents us with long chasms, which are never completely filled up. These epochs, neglected in the annals of nations, are those in which the destinies of a people have been committed to weak Princes, whose mind, destitute of character, has not inspired the imagination of any painter.

Historians, sparing of their time and their labour, attach themselves only to the names of celebrated Princes, whose great virtues, or great crimes, offer a richer subject, an easier task, and a more certain reputation to the author, who participates their immortality.

Nevertheless, ages roll on, and posterity seeks, with a painful, and frequently with an ineffectual curiosity, to connect the broken thread of History. It regrets that wise and useful writers have not left them any certain light, to enable them to fill up these long intervals. They, therefore, consult obscure antient memoirs,  
dictated

*dictated by the passions; collections of anecdotes, for the authenticity of which there is no voucher; gazettes of the times, from which hatred, fear, or flattery have by turns banished truth: and the result is, that the History of Nations, always incomplete, presents us only with an unshapen mixture of truth and error, of interest and insignificance, of sublime instruction and tedious compilation; whilst it ought to present only an useful and uninterrupted picture of the progress of the human mind, in barbarous ages, as well as in those which are enlightened, and the epochs of the decline of nations as well as those of their prosperity.*

*I know not whether I am deceived, but I think that History, having for its end the instruction of the present and the future, by the description of the past, is also useful, in retracing the faults or the weaknesses of governments, whose greatness has fallen into decay; as well as in painting, with vivacity, those rare and brilliant meteors, who cast a lively but short lustre on their country.*

*An author desirous to write the life of an individual would, doubtless, make choice of the most illustrious; but should he propose to write a History, no era ought to be neglected.*

*neglected. If energy prepares and directs great events, weakness gives rise to others equally important, which involve, dominate, and destroy; and Tacitus, when he describes the instability of Claudius, and its consequent troubles, inspires as much interest, as when he paints the gloomy and profound policy of Tiberius. I see no difference in similar pictures, but that of the names which may be given them: thus, I would have written the History of the Reign of Frederic the Great, and I will write that of the Reign of Frederic William II. The former has, in our own times, left behind him a great name, whilst the latter has only occupied a great place. The first has done great things, the second has been necessary to great events. But both must excite our curiosity, since both have had an influence on our destinies: the one by his genius, the other by his weakness.*

*Frederic William, heir of the power, but not of the glory, of Frederic the Great, had received from his uncle all the knowledge requisite for a throne; but he was destitute of talent to render it efficient. A soldier, bred in the greatest military school, but without genius, he waged war with method,*  
but

*but without success. Surrounded by able Ministers, possessing the plans of his predecessor, he disturbed all Europe by his projects, exhausted his country by his preparations, terrified his enemies by his threats, and astonished his friends by his versatility. Incited by vanity, restrained by indolence, enslaved by superstition, enervated by pleasures, he executed nothing which he was desirous of undertaking, finished nothing which he had begun; and after having successfully deceived and irritated every Power in Europe, at a time when all the passions were inflamed to the highest degree, Fate, who frequently delights in baffling the most profound political combinations, produced, from his weakness, a result which ought only to have been the fruit of the most consummate ability. He enlarged his dominions, and died, leaving his kingdom at peace in the centre of an embroiled world.*

*Russia menacing the Ottoman Empire with total destruction; Catherine II. in danger of being driven from her capital by Gustavus; Austria defeated by the Turks, threatened by the Prussians, alarmed by the troubles in Hungary, exhausted by the revolt in Brabant; the Revolution of Holland, aiming at the*

*the destruction of the Stadtholder but compelled by the Prussian arms to submit to his yoke; the efforts of Poland to attain independence, the misfortunes and the total partition of that kingdom; lastly, the explosion of the democratic spirit of the French, the war of a people against Kings, Nobles, and Priests; the crusade of Princes against Liberty; the invasion of France, the unforeseen resistance of the French, and their almost fabulous conquests, at the moment when every thing portended the dismemberment and ruin of their country; such are the principal events of the epoch of which I have undertaken to write a succinct history.*

*Never were so many projects conceived and abandoned; so many brilliant hopes disappointed; so many reputations eclipsed. Never did the fanaticism of Religion, and that of Liberty, kindle more flames, shed more blood, or immolate more victims. The conflagration was so much the more terrible, in proportion to the long duration of the preceding calm. Every year alternately saw the Kings of Europe threaten France with the fate of Troy, and convulsed France destroy the most formidable Thrones. Amidst this general disorder, this universal delirium, this succession of*

*of bloody battles, of murderous sieges, of rapid conquests; in the midst of this overthrow of all ranks, of all principles, of all Powers, and in the crash of all those broken sceptres, it will be sufficiently singular to describe a Military Monarch, disgusted with glory, reposing in profound peace among the volcanos which surrounded him, yielding up his enfeebled imagination to the fantastic illusions of the Illuminati, and suffering himself to be led quietly to the tomb by the caresses of Voluptuousness and the recreations of Superstition.*

## INTRODUCTIONS

# INTRODUCTION,

AND AN

EPITOME OF THE HISTORY

OF THE

*PRINCES*

WHO HAVE GOVERNED PRUSSIA AND  
BRANDENBURG.

---

**S**INCE the destruction of the Roman Empire by the Barbarians, the History of Europe, though abounding in great men, and in great events, has exhibited a character of uniformity, which renders it cold, and by no means attractive. The ferocity of the earliest periods of this new epoch; the cruelty and ignorant superstition of the first conquerors; the total ob-

VOL. I.

b

livion

livion of sentiments of liberty ; the ruin of the arts and sciences, of commerce, and of the *belles lettres* ; the rudeness of manners ; the dulness and partiality of ancient chronicles, written in the cells of cloysters ; all contributed to render barren and disgusting the labour necessary to extract some truths from this obscure chaos. Cæsar and Tacitus have said, in a few lines, all that can be interesting respecting the manners of the ancient inhabitants of Germany ; and the history of the Celts, which has employed twenty years research of its author, the learned Pé-loutier, does honour to his erudition, without producing any other result than a perfect indifference for the events of those remote times.

The Celts, the Franks, the Huns, the Slavonians, the Sarmatians, the Dacians, the Goths, the Cimbrians, the Teutronics, the Ostrogoths, constantly and successively present us with the same pictures. Simplicity of manners, ignorance of the rudest arts, love of a savage independence,

pendence, a passion for war, fidelity towards their brethren in arms, devotion for their chiefs, rapidity in their invasions, ferocity in their victories, discouragement and total dispersion after their defeats: nothing else has been presented during several ages by those barbarous hordes, who, from the frontiers of China, to the shores of the Atlantic, following each other like the waves of the sea, have by turns invaded, ruined, and depopulated the finest countries in the world.

Some of these victorious nations were at length softened and civilized by the vanquished; but this civilization was so slow and so incomplete, that they have preserved, even to the present age, some traces of their origin, and of their ancient manners. The pre-eminence of the Clergy above all the other orders of the State recalls to us the Welsh Druids and the Celtic Pontiffs; the usage of single combats, the superiority of Military employments over all other professions, and even over the Civil Magistracy,

b 2

a perpetual

a perpetual obstacle opposed to public virtue, preserves in the midst of modern Europe traces of the manners of the Scythians and Germans. At length the feudal system, which, during such a length of time, prevented Kings from being powerful, and the people from being free, left to the greatest part of civilized nations strong features of resemblance to the Huns, and those Tartars, the entire model of whom we find again, among the Kirghises in the Cuban, and among the Ossi, the Cabardiens and the Avari, who preserve to this hour, under the shelter of the rocks of Caucasus, or in the solitude of deserts, the same laws, the same customs, and the same names, which have been recorded by the Historians of Rome and Byzantium.

It is to this great revolution in the mind of nations that we must attribute the difference of the impressions which we receive in reading ancient and modern history. Formerly, history was an engaging drama; it has since become a barren journal.

nal. In Greece and in Italy, the laws which regulated the Rights of Citizens and fixed the limits of the Authority of Governments were the first and the continual object of the public interest; the love of country was the most predominant passion; and Military Glory, notwithstanding its splendour, never eclipsed the talents of the Orator and the Magistrate. Public opinion was every thing; it immortalized the heroes, it deified the men who excelled in the arts, or who made any useful discoveries; and the historian had continually to represent, not that which occupies a few men, but that which interests the whole human race. He was animated by the great models he had to describe, by the great passions which were inflamed by causes always important, from their nature, and from their effects.

The solemnity of the festivals, the civism of the games, the majesty of the assemblies, the importance of the discussions, the eloquence of the harangues, the

diversity of the laws, the energetic struggles of public spirit against the audacity of the ambitious, mixed, in the narratives, a variety, and spread in them a magic, of which our modern relations are totally destitute.

Long after the fall of the Roman Republic this interest was kept alive, because ancient forms and ancient manners are but slowly effaced. But there is no reader, who does not become fatigued after he begins to peruse the annals of the Lower Empire. The greatest events, the most bloody revolutions, the most formidable invasions, the most furious religious contests, produce in his mind only a chaos of images, which leave scarcely any traces in his memory; and if some particular motive did not induce him to renew this painful task of unprofitable investigation, he would, probably, remember only a few names; as those of Constantine, Julian, Theodore, Aleric, Genferic, Bellisarius, Narfes; and those memorable catastrophes

trophes which terrify the mind by their explosions, without interesting it by their details.

The infancy of those Monarchies, which succeeded the Empire of the Greeks, and that of the Romans, is enveloped in still deeper shades, and images more confused and more sanguinary.

Scarcely do we distinguish the splendour of a few famous names; as those of Clovis, of Charles Martel, of Charlemagne, of Otho, and of Alfred. The historian finds, in these hideous times, nothing to describe but robberies, usurpations, assassinations, excommunications, uniform invasions of power by the Nobility on the People, and by the Clergy on the Nobility and Kings. Voltaire himself, notwithstanding the fertility of his imagination, has been accused, as a historian, of incessant repetitions on these subjects; and absurd envy would not perceive that it was to the model, and not to the painter, that this reproach of fastidious uniformity should be addressed.

b 4

Later

Later times have furnished subjects for romance-writers and poets rather than for historians. The spirit of chivalry, the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, the feudal contests, the fury of the Crusades, produced new wars, gave place to illustrious feats of arms, immortalized some brilliant names; but prolonged the lethargy of the Sciences, the torpor of the Arts, and the nonentity of Commerce and of Industry.

At length knowledge again appeared; printing was invented; slavery was mitigated; the third estate began every where to resume a human existence; the power of Priests was decreased; that of Kings extended; a more enlightened policy softened the manners, reunited the divided people; it formed in Europe a balance of power, which, without destroying the scourge of the wars of Christianity, rendered them less barbarous. Prowess, though still reckoned the first of virtues, was not honoured alone. Justice began to revive, the laws became less unintelligible,

gible, property was more safe, agriculture was less abased, the advantages of commerce were perceived: Arts and Talents once more made their appearance; for they are seen to flourish in all places where they are honoured; and Philosophy might then interperse in history some useful remarks, and some interesting pages, with the barren recitals of battles, sieges and treaties.

Nevertheless, such was still the influence of ancient manners, that, even till this age, if we except the writings of Machiavel, and those of two or three other modern authors, there have been composed alone in England historical works, in which the reader of every class might find some food for reflection, and some result useful to his condition. Every where else is to be found only the uninteresting nomenclature of Princes; the details of their genealogy, on which they founded their rights, and rested their pretensions; the recital of their perpetual

perpetual wars; extracts of their treaties, generally as soon forgotten as concluded; and some revolutions of Dynasties, which ensanguined the thrones, without ameliorating the condition of the nations. In a word, every where is to be found the history of a few men and families, and no where that of nations, of manners, and of laws. The Court and the Army were every thing; the rest of the human race were nothing; and the sword might almost alone serve as the graver of history.

These are the considerations which have determined me to give here only a very hasty sketch of the successive reigns of the Princes, who have governed Prussia and Brandenburg until Frederic William II. The illustrious reign of his predecessor has already been celebrated by pens worthy of it\*; and I will extract from the history of this Prince only that which ap-

Mirabeau and Guibert,

appears to me indispensable, in order to explain the internal and external situation of Prussia at the period in which Frederick William succeeded him, and appeared in the list of Kings during the stormy age of revolutions.

The inhabitants of Brandenburg, Prussia, and Pomerania, remained longer barbarous and idolatrous than all the other nations of Europe. They were hunters and warriors, and never could the Roman arms penetrate far enough into the forests of Germany to deprive them of their independence. But frequently numerous swarms of their turbulent youth carried carnage and terror among the Gauls and into Italy; and whilst their warlike hordes laid waste the fertile countries of the south, other savage tribes, rushing from the north and the east, made themselves masters of their country, and seized on their flocks. After a short, but obstinate resistance, part of the vanquished departed, sword in hand, to seek  
another

another country, and the rest incorporated with the conquering people.

Their rude worship was that of Nature deified; they had no other temples than forests, lakes, and mountains. Odin, Tuiston, Irmenful and Man, were their principal deities; among them paradise was destined to the brave, and hell to the coward; and this belief was sufficient a long time to preserve their liberty.

Having become Christians, they were superstitious; and, like all the nations of Europe, tributaries of Rome. In this country were seen the same abuses, the same absurdities, the same outrages which had dishonoured so many reigns, and deluged so many countries with blood.

Frantic Crusades, false miracles, accusations of heresy and magic, the hosts exuding blood, images shedding tears, and animals refusing their food when offered them by those who were excommunicated; all the fables which cupidity

dity and ambition could devise, in order to protract ignorance, procure sacrifices, and obtain obedience, were a long time received with respect in these countries. At length, an inundation of indulgences, sold there, opened all eyes to the Machiavelian policy of Rome, and wrested those countries from the power of the Pope. They embraced the religion of Luther; superstition by degrees disappeared; in 1708 they burned the last forcerer, and at this day the most liberal toleration there prevails.

John Cicero carried thither the first ray of knowledge, and founded the University of Frankfort. Joachim Nestor was the Leo. X. of Brandenburg. The great Elector, by receiving into his States the French Refugees, banished by Louis XIV., operated a great change in his country; different principles of education, a more extensive commerce, a more active industry, formed there new men; and from that time a mixture of French and German manners took place, which still  
subsists

subsists, and gives to the inhabitants of Prussia, with the military spirit and loyalty of the Germans, an urbanity, industry, and activity, not to be met with in other parts of Germany. Till the time of Frederic I. all this country groaned under the anarchical tyranny of the feudal government. That Prince overcame all the petty tyrants; the States preserved an influence, which by degrees they lost. George William, in 1631, for the last time, consulted them relative to a projected alliance with Sweden. He substituted for them a Council, which attained, during his reign, a degree of authority, little differing from that of the Mayors of the Palace in France. The great Elector divided this Council, and gave to each of his Ministers particular departments; he established two Counsellors in every Province, to manage all its concerns. Frederic William completed the establishment of despotism; he farther reduced the power of the Council and the Ministers, and placed under the  
the

the Presidency of the Marshal of the Court the Consistory charged with the affairs of religion. In 1724 there was established a Grand Directory, divided into four departments, over each of which presided a Minister of State; and in every province was formed a College of Justice, and a College of Finance, subject to the Ministers of these departments. The King, on the report of his Ministers, decided and signed every thing. No Court had a right to arrest, to relax, or to modify the execution of his will, which superseded the law.

The first Electors had for their troops no more than a guard of a hundred men, and some *lanfquenets*\*, and, in case of war, *l'arrière-ban* †. Thus, the success of war depended on chance, and the caprice of a disorderly multitude, whose un-

\* German foot soldiers.

† *L'arrière-ban*.—This military term is not translatable into English. It has its origin in the feudal system, and means an assembly of those of noble race, who held fiefs, or who, not holding fiefs, were convoked by the King to serve him in time of war.—Tr.  
certain

certain zeal left no possibility of forming any solid plan. George William raised an army of twenty-five thousand men, supported by the subsidies of the Emperor and of Holland. The great Elector had even thirty thousand men in pay. He bestowed more attention on the cavalry than on the other troops. The second King of Prussia increased his army to seventy-two thousand men; his successor to two hundred thousand; and, from that period, Prussia became one of the first Powers in Europe; for, in the political balance, every thing is decided by the heaviest sword, and the most numerous battalions.

After having traced this slight outline of the manners, the worship, and the government of these countries, if we take a rapid view of the Princes who have governed them, it will be seen that their origin is lost in the obscurity of the times, which renders it the more illustrious; for nobility is like the mountains, whose majesty we admire only when their summits

summit is hidden in the clouds. Some authors trace the House of Hohenzollern from the Collonnes, and others from Witi-kind. The first person of that race, who is certainly known, was Tafsillon; he lived in the year 800. History records no more of them till the year 1200, when there appears a Prince of that House, named Conrade, Burgrave of Nuremberg. Thus, during four centuries, their genealogy has been preserved without blemish, but without any farther celebrity. In 1332 Frederic IV. took up arms in favour of Louis of Bavaria; he made Frederic of Austria prisoner; and he first gave rise to that rivalry, which has since occasioned so many feuds between those two Houses. In 1363 the Emperor, Charles IV., in his turn, imprisoned Frederic V. at the Diet of Nuremberg. By a singular vicissitude of fortune, he left a prison in order to be the Emperor's Lieutenant. In 1408, Frederic VI. took possession of the district of Brandenburg, and, with the

assistance of the Duke of Pomerania, he subjugated all the petty Seigniors, who tyrannized over this country. One of them possessed twenty-four fortresses, which were razed. All these small fortresses perpetuated, in these horrible times, the extortions of the Seigniors, the weakness of the Princes, and the oppression of the countries. The Suevi, the Vandals, the Henetes, the Saxons, and the Franks, had by turns inhabited, and governed the district of Brandenburg. The House of Hohenzollern united under its power the wrecks of these different people; and time, by degrees, confounded their families, their laws, and their manners.

Before the accession of the present family, nine dynasties reigned there successively. Albert l'Ours strengthened his domination in 1100, and was the first Elector. The Teutonic Order for some time possessed the new district, and the Duke of Pomerania governed the Ukraine. The Electorate was several times bought and sold

fold by Louis of Bavaria, by Sigismund, and by the Teutonic Order: such was the condition of men in those times, the effects of the savage and chivalrous heroism of which we are desired to regret. Towns and people were sold like flocks; their rights were forgotten; and their only portion was obedience and tribute.

Frederic Iron-tooth gave alone, in the midst of these ages of ignorance and infamy, a rare example of prudence and moderation; he refused two kingdoms; Bohemia, which the Pope offered to him; and Poland, to which he was invited by the Nobles. The first of these presents appeared to him not sufficiently lawful; the second he considered too dangerous: he in preference accepted Lusatia, the inhabitants of which voluntarily subjected themselves to his government, and the new district, which the Teutonic Order sold him. His possessions were less splendid, but more solid; and he gained in tranquillity what he lost in lustre. In 1471, he was succeeded by his brother,

Albert, Margrave of Anspach and Bareith; who was at once a hero of history and of romance; he gained eight battles, and bore away the prize in seventeen tournaments. The Dukes of Bavaria and Burgundy were compelled to yield to his valour; and the ability with which he knew how to preserve by treaties what he had acquired by arms, procured him in peace the appellation of Albert-Ulysses, as during the war he had been named Albert-Achilles. John Cicero succeeded him, and made an eventual treaty of succession with the Houses of Saxony and Hesse. From him arise the pretensions of Prussia on Crossen and Ratibor, of which George was stripped by Ferdinand of Austria, at the expence of 130,000 florins, which were never paid. John Cicero merited his surname from his love for the sciences; he was also conciliatory and pacific. Joachim Nestor imitated his moderation, and reigned in peace thirty-two years. Joachim II., disgusted with the ambition of the Court of Rome, and seeing

seeing Saxony inundated with indulgences, and plundered in order to enrich Cibo, sister of Leo X., took advantage of the people's disposition, and shook off the yoke of the Pope. He embraced the tenets of Luther, acquired thereby several bishoprics, and, at the same time, had the wisdom not to take any part either in the union of Smalalden, or in the religious quarrels which were the result. He built Spandaw; gave to his second son the Bishopric of Magdeburg; and obtained from the King of Poland the right of succession to the Duchy of Prussia. This Duchy, inhabited successively by the Slavonians, the Russians, the Venetes, and the Sarmatians, was still idolatrous in the year 1000. The Teutonic Knights carried thither their arms and their faith. The Poles soon took from them Dantzick, Thorn, and half of Prussia, which they retained till the accession of John Sigismund. John George, and Joachim Frederic, lived without leaving any traces of their

their reigns, which gives us reason to think they were mild, happy, and pacific; for the Princes who occupy the least place in history are frequently those who merit the most honourable one in the hearts of their subjects.

John Sigismund, in 1618, inherited Prussia, and claimed also the possession of Juliers, Cleves, Lamarck, Ravensberg, and Ravenstein. The House of Neuburg disputed this succession with him: it was supported by Henry IV. King of France. The Dutch took the part of the Elector. The Emperor wished to sequester his dominions. The Protestants opposed it. The Elector was as violent as ambitious; he maintained his pretensions with ardour, and broke up the negotiations, by giving one of his competitors a blow in the face: he died, leaving the quarrel undecided, and war kindled. George William, who succeeded him in 1619, and who lived till 1640, was on the point of losing every thing which his predecessors had acquired; and when

when he died, the most consummate policy could never have been able to foresee the lustre and the power of his successors: he governed without order, fought without energy, and negotiated without ability; his reign was a series of weakness and misfortunes, and during the whole thirty years war, his country was by turns the field of battle, and the prey of the Swedes and the Imperialists.

But all obstacles yield to the exertions of true talent; and difficult circumstances, which crush mediocrity, form and develope great men, and render their triumphs more brilliant. Frederic William, in 1640, ascended, not a throne, but its wreck. He displayed the genius of a great King, and the prudence of an Elector. By his wisdom he recovered his dominions, and by his valour extended their limits. Equally superior in minute details, and in affairs of importance, his genius was always proportioned to time, place, and circumstance. At an age when others learn to read, he learned to conquer.

The Prince of Orange was his tutor, and foretold his glory. In his youth he gave so many signs of superior merit, that the Minister Schwarzenberg kept him a long time removed from State affairs, fearing lest his penetration should discover and unmask his own mediocrity. When we search for Merit in Courts, we are sure to discover it in the fears with which it inspires Folly.

Frederic William was twenty years of age when he assumed the reins of government. The greater part of his possessions was in the hands of the Swedes; Cleves, in those of the Spaniards; Prussia exhibited only ruins and deserts. He obtained at first, by skilful negotiations, and sacrifices of money, a truce with the Swedes, and the restitution of his invaded States. In 1648, the treaty of Westphalia deprived him of part of Pomerania, but assured to him Magdeburg, Habberstadt, Minden, Camin, Hohenstein, and Reichenstein. Afterwards the Swedes having possessed themselves of

Prussia,

Prussia, he recovered it by fighting for Charles Gustavus against Poland, and deciding by his prowess the success of the battle of Warsaw. Some years after, he repressed the ambition of the Swedes, by forming an alliance against them with Poland and Denmark; and by that war he acquired Elbing, and more extended frontiers. The peace of Oliva secured his conquests, and fixed the balance of the Northern Powers.

The great Elector added still more to his reputation, by succouring the Emperor against the Turks, who threatened Austria and Poland with total destruction. He afterwards assisted Holland against France; and in that memorable war, a rival worthy of Turenne, he had the glory of saving that illustrious enemy, by informing him of a plot formed against his life. The peace of Woffen, which had but the duration of a truce, gained him the restitution of Cleves. War soon recommenced: he fought against France; and entered Alsace at the head of the Imperialists.

But whilst he was carrying his arms to such a distance, the Swedes, taking advantage of his absence, invaded his dominions. The Elector flew to their defence with the rapidity of lightning, and won the battle of Ferbellin. A fresh invasion of the same enemies was attended with no better success; and those Swedes, so fierce, whose very name, at that time, terrified the Empire, were defeated, dispersed, and put to flight by Frederic William. His extraordinary activity baffled all their designs, checked their courage, and, to use the words of the Great Frederic, "they entered Prussia like Romans, and escaped from it like Tartars." Louis XIV., relieved from his enemies, and abusing his power, at length compelled the Great Elector, by the peace of St. Germain, to restore Pomerania to Sweden. But whilst he yielded with prudence, he treated with dignity, and retained Camin, as well as a part of his conquests.

What

What appears scarcely conceivable is, that, in the midst of all these troubles, this Prince found the means of retrieving his finances; and the order which he established was so judicious, that the Bank never once suspended its payments, even during the invasion of the Swedes. As he never took up arms but in support of just wars, he always preserved the confidence of his allies, and the esteem of his enemies; and several powers made choice of him as an arbitrator in their quarrels. Louis XIV., Cromwell, and he, conferred a lustre on the age in which they lived. But whilst he equalled the others in glory, he had never to reproach himself either with the ambition of the Monarch or the crimes of the Protector. He re-united his dispersed possessions, restored peace to his country, promoted the arts, and established justice; and wisely profiting from the errors of Despotism and Superstition, he collected together the French Refugees, and, by their means, diffused knowledge

ledge and industry throughout his dominions.

Frederic I. succeeded to the great Elector, in 1690. He had, during his whole life, entertained no other aim but that of becoming a King, and wearing a crown which his predecessor had merited. He harrassed every Court by his intrigues; and, as it happens with those who have but one point in view, he triumphed by his perseverance over all obstacles, and obtained, by the power of the rival powers, that sceptre, which was the sole object of his desires. Ever ready to sacrifice the substance for the shadow, he received from the Emperor Joseph I. the title of King, by giving up the subsidies he received from him, and by undertaking to maintain, for his service, eight thousand men at his own expence.

This new King constantly managed Peter the Great, Charles XII., and Joseph, always submitting to the strongest without insulting the weakest; by this circumspection he preserved peace; but he sold his

his troops, alternately, to England and to Holland. Never did there appear less dignity, and more vanity. He was great in little matters, and little in great matters. England wished to send eight thousand Prussians to fight her battles in Italy. Frederic had already refused this succour. The Duke of Marlborough, who knew his weakness, obtained these eight thousand auxiliaries, by flattering his pride, and humbly presenting him the napkin and ewer. Avarice also frequently influenced his policy. He was desirous of withdrawing his troops from the coalition; they made him a present of a fine diamond, and he left in Holland fifteen thousand men, who perished there. Such was the first King of Prussia, who appeared to be so much more in the rank of mediocrity, because Fate had placed him between two superior men, that splendidly filled the throne before and after him. Frederic William, his son, succeeded him in 1713.

He

He found Europe tranquil: the peace of Utrecht had produced a calm after so many storms. The Great Frederic says in his Memoirs, that a mere pleasantry between two Englishmen contributed to the creation of a military power, which, some time after, conducted Frederic the Great to the height of glory, and entirely changed the system of European policy. These two Englishmen had wagered, that the King of Prussia never could constantly maintain more than fifteen thousand regular troops. Frederic William was heir to all the vanity of his father, but with it he possessed more energy. Piqued at the insulting doubt of these Britons, he determined to sacrifice every thing in order to have a powerful army; and, in fact, after having increased his revenues by his intellect, and lessened his expences by his reforms, and by the inflexible severity in his administration, he found himself enabled to pay an army of seventy thousand men. This army enabled him to wage a successful war against Charles

XII., who, by the treaty of Stockholm, ceded to him a part of Pomercania. He afterwards, but unsuccessfully, made war with the Emperor against France; and, with his son, fought in the last campaign of Prince Eugene. More a negotiator than a warrior, he signed nearly forty treaties, of so little importance, that they are not worth the trouble of mentioning. His administration was pacific externally, severe internally. He protected commerce, and added to the improvement and population of his kingdom, by establishing in it numerous colonies of Swiss, and of the inhabitants of different countries. We may form a just idea of his obduracy, in recollecting that for a slight fault he sent his son to prison, and compelled him to be present at the punishment of his friend.

This son, the Great Frederic, has drawn the portrait of that cruel father. It merits to be preserved as a monument of talent, of conciseness, and of modesty. It is as follows:—

“ The

“ The King’s policy was always inseparable from his justice. Less employed in extending than in preserving what he possessed; always armed for his own defence, and never for the distress of Europe; he, on all occasions, preferred the useful to the agreeable; building profusely for his subjects, and never expending the smallest sum for his own accommodation. Cautious in his engagements, true to his promises, austere in his manners, rigorous over those of others, a strict observer of military discipline, governing his State by the same laws as his army; he had so good an opinion of human nature, that he asserted that all his subjects were as accurate as himself. Frederic William left, at his death, sixty-six thousand men, whom he maintained by his economy, his finances augmented, the public treasury filled, and a surprising order in all his affairs. If it be true, that we are indebted for the shade of the oak which covers us to the virtue of  
“ the

“ the acorn which produced it, all the  
“ world will agree, that there is to be  
“ found in the laborious life of this Prince,  
“ and in the measures which his wife  
“ adopted, the principles of the  
“ prosperity enjoyed by the Royal House  
“ since his death.”



## CONTENTS.

---

*Sketch of the Life of Frederic the Great*

Page 1

### CHAP. I.

*Picture of the Political Situation of Europe, at the epoch in which Frederic William II. ascended the Throne of Prussia, 1786*

13

### CHAP. II.

*Hopes inspired by the Accession of Frederic William II.—His Education.—His Character.—His Military Conduct.—His first Operations.—His first Errors.—Picture of his Court.—His Administration.—Portraits of his Counsellors and of his Ministers.—Total Change in the Administration of Prussia.—Restitution made to the Duke of Mecklenburg.—Consolidation of the German League.*

21

### CHAP. III.

*Formation of a Camp of Eighty Thousand Austrians in Bohemia in 1787.—Projects of Catherine against Courland.—Her Declarations on the Affairs of Dantzick.—Conclusion of a Treaty of Commerce betwixt France and Russia.—Breach of that betwixt Russia and England.—Journey of Catherine to the Crimea.—Interview with the King of Poland.—Journey of Joseph II. to the Crimea.—Armament of the Turks and Russians.—Grievances of those two Empires.—Uneasiness which this Journey occasioned in Europe.—England and Prussia advise the Turks to go to War.—France wishes to persuade them to Peace.—Declaration of War by the Turks.—Troubles in Brabant.—Assembly of the Notables in France.—Fermentation in Poland.—Affairs of Holland.*

44

*Revolution*

CHAP. IV.

<i>Revolution of Holland</i>	64
<i>Memoir on the Revolution of Hollana, by Citizen Caillard, formerly Chargé d'Affaires at Petersburg, at the Hague, and French Minister at Berlin</i>	99

APPENDIX.

<i>Letter from Count de Saint-Priest, the French Ambassador, to the Marquis de la Fayette</i>	435
<i>Edicts respecting Religion</i>	437
<i>Edicts of Censorship</i>	451

---

ERRATA.

Page 7 line 9	for gallantry, read gallantries.
13 — 11	after Europe, add at the epoch.
18 — 3	for its, read her.
27 — 11	for individuals, read invalids.
33 — 17	for beneficent, read beneficent.
45 — 10	for rights, read duties.
74 — 18	for cant, read court.
76 — 22	for he might, read it should.
101 — 18	for did not regard, read regarded only.
107 — 1	for William V., read William III.
145 — 24	for at a fort a, read a full.
150 — 14	for Herbert, read Hertzberg.
163 — 19	for whilst waiting, read in the mean time.
164 — 21	for in place of the assemblies, read at their place of meeting.
195 — 27	for these, read this.
233 — 7	for itself, read herself.
258 — 8	for these, read thus.
416 — 14	for nomination, read commotion.
ib. — 16	dele in.

---

SKETCH

SKETCH  
OF THE  
L I F E  
OF  
*FREDERIC THE GREAT.*

---

MEN generally possess defects and virtues the reverse of those of their fathers. The parent of Frederic was named the *Serjeant King*. He was trifling, cruel, and detested letters. His son was literary, a philosopher, humane, and at all times unfolded a policy as extensive as his genius. The enemy of all restraint, he wished in his youth to escape and make the tour of Europe; he was put in prison at Custrin, and obliged to be present at the punishment of his friend Katt, who had advised him to travel. Frederic shed no tears; but the fruit of his meditation, during the punishment, was the determination never to imitate the cruelty of which he was the victim; and never did he forget this bloody lesson. He was fond of pleasures

VOL. I.

B

ures

fures because they were forbidden him, and because he had no business. His reign was expected to be an effeminate one; but when at the age of twenty-nine he became king, he forgot his pleasures, thought of nothing but glory, and no longer employed himself but in attention to his finances, his army, his policy, and his laws. His provinces were scattered, his resources weak, his power precarious; his army of seventy thousand soldiers was more remarkable for handsomeness of the men, and the elegance of their appearance, than for their discipline. He augmented it, instructed it, exercised it, and fortune began to open the field of glory to him at the moment he was fully prepared to enjoy her favours. Charles XII. was dead, and his station filled by a king without authority. Russia, deprived of Peter the Great, who had only rough-hewn her civilization, languished under the feeble government of the Empress Anne, and of a cruel and ignorant minister. Augustus III. King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, a Prince devoid of character, could not inspire him with any dread. Louis XV. a weak and peaceable king, was governed by Cardinal Fleuri, who loved peace, but always by his weakness suffered himself to be drawn into war. He presented to Frederic rather a support than

an

an obstacle. The court of France had espoused the cause of Charles VII. against Francis I. Maria Theresa, wife of Francis, and Queen of Hungary, saw herself threatened by England, Holland, and France; and whilst she had but little reason to hope the preservation of her hereditary dominions, that arrogant princess wished to place her husband on the Imperial Throne. This quarrel kindled the flames of war in Europe; the genius of Frederic saw by a single glance that the moment was arrived for elevating Prussia to the second order of powers; he made an offer to Maria Theresa to defend her, if she would cede Silesia to him, and threatened her with war in case of refusal. The Empress, whose firmness nothing could shake, impolitically refused that proposition; war was declared, and Frederic entered Silesia at the head of eighty thousand men. This first war lasted eighteen months. Frederic, by gaining five battles, shewed that Europe would recognize one great man more in her bloody annals. He had begun the war from ambition, and contrary to strict justice; he concluded it with ability, but by the abandonment of France his ally, without giving her information of it, and he thus put in practice, when he was seated on the throne, the principles of Machiavel, whom he had refuted

before he ascended it. Men judge according to the event. The hero was absolved by victory from the wrongs with which justice reproached him; and this brilliant example serves to confirm men in that error, too generally and too lightly adopted, that ability in politics is incompatible with the strict rule of morality.

Four years after, in 1744, Frederic again took up arms. He invaded Bohemia, Upper Silesia, and Moravia. Vienna thought him at her gates; but the defection of the Bavarians, the retreat of the French, and the return of Prince Charles into Bohemia, rapidly changed the face of affairs. The position of Frederic became as dangerous as it had been menacing; he was on the point of being lost, and he saw himself compelled to retire with as much precipitation, as he had advanced with boldness. The gaining the battle of Hohen-Friedberg saved him. That retreat and that victory fixed the seal to his reputation. It was after this action that he wrote to Louis XV. "I have just discharged in Silesia the bill of exchange which your majesty drew on me at Fontenoy." A letter so much the more modest, as Frederic had conquered, and Louis had only been witness to a victory. He displayed the same genius and the same activity in the campaign of 1745,

1745, and once more abandoned France in making his separate peace at Dresden. By this treaty Francis was peaceably assured of the empire, and the cession of Silesia was confirmed to Frederic. France during this war committed some wrongs, which might palliate the abandonment of Prussia. The French did not keep Prince Charles within bounds, they made no diversion into Germany, and fought no where but in Flanders. Frederic wrote to the English ambassador: "*These are my conditions. I will rather perish with my whole army than relax a tittle of them; and if the empress does not accept them, I will raise my pretensions.*" To the Russian ambassador he returned for answer: "*I have nothing to do with the King of Poland, but to chastise him in his electorate, and make him sign an act of repentance in his capital.*" He said to Marshal Belle-Isle, on learning from him that he had abandoned France: "Monfieur Marshall, think of yourself; "I have gained my point, and I make peace." By these traits we see the energy and the conciseness of his policy, and how much it differed from the diffuse language of diplomacy, the intrigues of which it baffled.

Frederic, in time of peace, was a stranger both to pomp and to effeminacy; study was

the relaxation of his labours; his bow was always bent, and he employed the interval of battles only to sharpen his arms; it is true, his situation compelled him to it. Security cannot accompany a reign signalized by ambition and begun by invasions. He rendered his hours of repose illustrious by his literary productions. The Memoirs of Brandenburg, and his poetical works, give to this warrior prince a rank sufficiently distinguished, not as an elegant writer, but as a philosopher; and if the negligence of his style is frequently perceptible, the depth of his thoughts is always to be admired.

In 1756, Europe was again in a flame, France and England declared war against each other, and both sought alliances; Frederic ranged himself on the side of England, and by that became the object of the unreflecting vengeance of the French, and of the alliance of that power with Austria; Austria also formed an alliance with the Court of Petersburg by means of a Saxon secretary; Frederic discovered the project of the Courts of Petersburg, Dresden, and Vienna, to invade the Prussian dominions. He was beforehand with them, and began the war by some conquests. Accused of aggression by every body, the whole world would have condemned his rashness, and would have

have taxed him with perfidy had he been vanquished; it admired his foresight and his policy, because he was a conqueror. He first seized on Saxony, beat the Austrians twice, and was in his turn beaten at Kollen, near Prague, which had made more resistance than he expected.

His conquest of Silesia, his antecedent invasion of Saxony, his treaty with England, and his epigrams on the gallantry of the Empress Elizabeth, had inspired his four enemies with the desire of overturning his throne. But in this crisis, which exposed him to the greatest danger, his genius resisted that weighty mass of enemies, and his fortune deceived all political calculations.

When the Elector of Brandenburg made war on France, Louis the XIV. did not perceive that he had one enemy more; and a few years after, the chief of the same electorate made head alone with almost all Europe armed against him; so much does one man change the destiny and the strength of nations.

Frederic beaten, was compelled to evacuate Bohemia. A corps of Austrians, commanded by Haddik, penetrated even to Berlin. Eighty thousand French, pushing their victories into Hanover, obliged the army of the Duke of Cumberland to capitulate at Closter Seven.

Every thing seemed to render the destruction of the King of Prussia inevitable. He was under the BAN of the empire. Forty thousand French, joined to the army of the Circles, were advancing into Saxony in order to execute this decree. Frederic, with the ability, the courage and activity of Cæsar, beat the French at Rosbach, put them to the route, and without being intoxicated by victory, though he had never been daunted by the danger, he flew into Silesia, beat the Austrians at Leuthen, retook Breslaw, Leignitz, and Schweidnitz, and took or killed forty-five thousand Austrians in this single campaign.

In 1758, he penetrated into Moravia, and besieged Olmutz; but he was obliged to retire, and return to the defence of his dominions against the Russians, whom he defeated at Jorndorff; but who that day killed him twelve thousand men; the remainder of that war was to him an alternate series of bloody triumphs and extreme dangers. The Russians, conquerors at Zulikaw and at Custrin, possessed themselves of Berlin; the Austrians of Dresden. The King of Prussia discovered as much wisdom in defensive war as he had displayed boldness in his invasions; and the Duke of Brunswick, then hereditary prince, in associating himself with his dangers, acquired during

during that campaign a reputation of which the faults he committed, when he made war on France at the head of the coalition, have not been able to deprive him.

In 1761 and 1762, the dangers of Frederic were increased by the attack of the Swedes. He saw himself surrounded at Lignitz by four armies; he deceived three of them and destroyed the fourth. The victory of Torgaw was by no means decisive, but gave the king time to breathe. After that, whilst defending Silesia, and confiding to his brother Henry the defence of Saxony, he saw himself again surrounded, lost Schweidnitz, and during the winter appeared almost sinking under the misfortunes which overwhelmed him; he carried poison about him, and then bitterly felt how very dearly ambition made him pay for her favours, and what are the dangers which an unjust and conquering policy draws after it.

The death of Elizabeth at length delivered him from a part of his dangers. Peter III. had conceived an enthusiasm for the King of Prussia, which afterwards cost him his life and his empire; he made peace with Frederic, and thereby broke all the plans of the allies. The winter following the peace with Austria was concluded, and Frederic did not lose by it a single village.

Conqueror of the half of Europe, this peace completed his glory and consolidated his power. His tranquillity was never afterwards disturbed but by the slight storm of 1778. Joseph II. wished to possess himself of Bavaria; France was neither so imprudent to second him in this enterprise, nor had the courage to oppose it. Frederic, seconded by Catherine, stopped him in his progress, and the peace of Teschen caused the King of Prussia to be looked on as the strongest rampart that the empire could oppose to the ambition of the Emperor.

The division of Poland, attributed to the policy of Frederic, was absolutely the work of Catherine II. who made the first overture of this project to prince Henry. The King of Prussia seized with avidity this opportunity of extending his power; morality condemns, and diplomacy excuses him. In 1785, Joseph, who had not been able to conquer Bavaria by arms, was desirous of obtaining it by negotiation. He made an offer to the elector to exchange it for the Low Countries. The Empress of Russia, faithful to an ally who had abandoned to her the Ottoman empire, seconded his endeavours, and wished by terrifying the Duke des Deux-Ponts to extort his consent to this exchange. Frederic, sensible how formidable this concentration

centration of forces and this rounding of possessions would make the Austrian, sounded the alarm, and raised the standard of the Germanic league. This operation, which made him, in fact, the chief of the empire, whose liberty was threatened by the emperor, was the last act of this glorious reign. He died a peaceful philosopher, after having lived a warlike prince, and left to his successor a consolidated power, a formidable army, able generals, a treasure so filled as to make three campaigns without taxes; but he left him at the same time a most difficult part to sustain: to such heroes there are successors, but seldom equals.

Frederic, feared by his enemies and by his officers, was beloved by his soldiers and by the people. A skilful despot, his arbitrary power was directed by justice. No one knew better how to form and encourage talents, of which he was nevertheless jealous. An enemy of pomp; his taxes appeared less insupportable, because they were always employed to increase the glory and the territory of Prussia, to augment its population, and to recompense useful services. Near to him, intrigue was destitute of force, and merit of fear. He has been reproached with having adulterated the money of the country, and incommoded commerce by impolitic prohibitions:

prohibitions: the crisis of the war pleaded his pardon for the first wrong; the second, proves that no man can ever unite in himself all the qualities of a statesman. Frederic was quite as confined in all his ideas on commerce, as he was expanded in those on policy and on war. The code which he published cannot assign him a distinguished rank amongst celebrated legislators. But experience has only too often proved, how much more wise it is for the happiness of nations to amend their old laws, than to give them new ones. Frederic, as a philosopher, as a warrior, and as a politician, shed a lustre on his country, eclipsed his rivals, and would deserve, perhaps, that his name should be given to the CENTURY, that was witness to his birth, his reign, and his death.

HISTORY

**HISTORY**  
 OF THE  
**PRINCIPAL EVENTS**  
 OF THE REIGN  
 OF  
**FREDERIC WILLIAM II.**  
 KING OF PRUSSIA;  
 AND  
 A POLITICAL PICTURE OF EUROPE.

---

CHAP. I.

*Picture of the Political Situation of Europe, in which Frederic William II. ascended the Throne of Prussia, 1786.*

NEVER was Europe more tranquil than at the time when Frederic William II. took into a weak hand the reins of that government which his uncle had so vigorously held, and shaken with so much splendour. The Emperor, discouraged, had renounced the idea of reconquering Silesia, and had been obliged to adjourn his projects on Bavaria. Poland was resigned to the shameful losses she had suffered,

ferred, and dared not breathe the resentment she retained of them. France, governed by a peaceable monarch, and proud of having taken away thirteen provinces from Great Britain, was guaranteed from all dread of attack by her alliance with the Austrians and the Spaniards, and enjoyed in effeminacy and the carelessness of a deceitful splendour, an apparent prosperity, which could not fail soon to disappear, from the disorder of her finances, and the weakness of her monarch.—England, wearied by a five years war, and humiliated by the loss of her colonies, waited an opportunity to avenge herself, and silently prepared to regain in India, what she had lost in America.

Russia, checked in her ambitious projects, suspended their execution. Besides Catherine II. had sufficiently aggrandized her dominions by the first partition of Poland, and by the Invasion of the Crimea. Italy was far from dreading the disasters which threatened her, and during a long time had scarcely been heard from afar, in this voluptuous country, the noise of the storms which had agitated the rest of Europe. The able policy of Venice, concentrated within her narrow territory, was employed only in maintaining the undisputed authority of her tyrannical and suspicious senate. Majestic  
Genoa

Genoa supported the pride of her nobility by the wealth of her industrious merchants; and the protection of France placed both these Republics out of the reach of all apprehensions. The King of Sardinia, whose ancestors had been at so much trouble in maintaining their existence, when Austria and France made war on each other, had no longer occasion to employ that artful policy, which had so often obliged them to change sides. The alliance of the Courts of Versailles and Vienna would ensure their tranquility. The government of Naples drowsily reclined on the bosom of voluptuousness, and beheld without anxiety the diminution of her agriculture, the decay of her commerce, the disorganization of her troops, the annihilation of her marine, and the corruption of her subjects. Leopold, Duke of Tuscany, hated by the nobles, beloved by the people, and esteemed by the learned, was preparing, by constituting the happiness of a small state, to govern a great empire with wisdom. The capital of the christian world, now become that of the most scandalous vices, shone no longer but by the lustre of her name; the traveller searched no more there, except for old monuments and grand recollections: the tributes of credulity almost every where ceased to nourish  
her

her power : no crown dreaded the tiara ; the feet of the Popes were still kissed, but their hands no more dared hurl the thunderbolt.

Even the Portuguese and the Spaniards, though still receiving the bulls of Rome with respect, no longer submitted their politics to the orders of the head of the church ; and the successor of St. Peter, though still placed at the head of Princes, had ceased to be among the number of the influencing powers of Europe.

Portugal had rendered herself tributary and dependent on England ; and vainly consoled herself for her poverty, by the beauty of her climate, and the security which the weakness of her neighbours allowed her to enjoy.

Switzerland, in her happy wisdom, was far from foreseeing that free-men would come, and stain the temple of liberty with blood. Denmark, governed by a wise minister, profited by a peace which at all events he was determined to preserve by a prudent neutrality, in order to extend its commerce, and augment its prosperity. The King of Sweden, doomed to a momentary repose by the general system of Europe, was intoxicated with the glory of a revolution which had placed the authority of the Prince above that of the Senate. He had returned from running over Europe, to retail  
stories

stories in every place, and to enjoy his celebrity; but as his temper was as violent as his power was feeble, he expected with impatience that some new conflagration, troubling the universal tranquillity, might give him an opportunity of realizing his schemes of conquest, whether against Denmark or Russia.

The Elector of Saxony wisely repaired the calamities with which the war had burthened his country. The Duke of Brunswick, enjoying the reputation of being the first general in Europe, waited, perhaps with impatience, events which might increase his glory; but which, contrary to his hopes, have since tarnished its lustre. The Landgrave of Hesse, rich from the sale of his soldiers, was only occupied with the hope of becoming an Elector. The Elector of Bavaria, supine on his throne, and governed by Austria, would have surrendered his dominions to that power, had not the Duke of Deux Ponts, who was to succeed him, rejecting the insidious offer of the possession of the Low Countries, and of an illusory crown, emancipated himself from the dread of a compulsory exchange, by the protection of Prussia. Holland had ceased to be warlike since she had become entirely commercial; she had sacrificed glory to wealth; she could pay all the armies of Europe, but was incapable of resisting any of them. The

VOL. I.

c

Emperor,

Emperor, by some pretensions to the navigation of the Scheldt, had threatened to disturb its repose, and peace was purchased by a disgraceful sacrifice of money, which France had advised, and in which she participated. Splendid recollections, however, left her some illusions which the rival policy of England and France entertained. She believed that these two nations disputed for her alliance, while they were occupied only in determining by which of them she should be governed.

This rapid but faithful picture suffices to prove, that never was a more stormy epoch preceded by a more universal calm; and the most political foresight could then scarce discern some of the faint sparks which soon after kindled a conflagration so terrible. Above all, it was difficult to foresee at a time, when policy turning towards commerce, seemed every where to renounce a mad and ruinous system of conquest, that Europe was on the eve of being overturned by that peaceable and philanthropic philosophy, which had so constantly preached peace, and whose eloquence the friend of reason, and humanity, had so often and so justly condemned, the machiavelism of ministers, the despotism of princes, the intolerance of priests, and the ambition of conquerors.

The

The only clouds which at this time appeared in the political horizon were so light, that the smallest effort seemed sufficient to dissipate them. The Emperor Joseph II. from several memorials presented to him during his travels, had resolved to make some alterations in the administration of the Belgic provinces; which had displeased the clergy and a part of the nobility, and had given rise to some complaints. The Prince of Orange wished to retain certain prerogatives, which were disputed by the States of Holland. England supported the pretensions of the Prince; France approved the discontent of the patriots; and Prussia appeared desirous of conciliating this difference. Russia accused the Turks of having, assisted by the Pacha of Achalzig, the attacks of the Lefgis against Georgia, and of favouring the frequent incursions of the Cuban Tartars and the Cabardians on the Russian territory. The Porte reproached the Empress with her pretensions to be paramount over Georgia, and with her hostilities against the inhabitants of Caucasus. Complaints were made at Peterburgh of the endeavours of the Porte to excite Persia against Russia. The Grand Signior accused the Russians of fomenting by their intrigues the spirit of revolt in the Archipelago

and in Greece. The French Ambassadors, Choiseul and Segur, by their mediation, were successful in settling this quarrel.

England, who hoped to renew her treaty of commerce with Russia, and to prevent the conclusion of that negociation by the French Minister, dreaded to incense the Empress, and still gave pacific counsels to the Porte; and the King of Prussia, though irritated against the cabinet of Petersburg, which had preferred an alliance with Austria to one with him; seemed to apprehend the commencement of a war, which he might perhaps be drawn into, and which might expose a certain glory to new hazards. Thus, when Frederic William succeeded to his uncle, he had in the first moments, no political inquietude, which could trouble the pleasure of mounting a throne, so long and so sadly expected.

*The English Warship retreating  
at the Battle of New Orleans  
Jan 8. 1815.  
fought with great slaughter*

CHAP.

## CHAP. II.

*Hopes inspired by the Accession of Frederic William II.—His Education.—His Character.—His Military Conduct.—His first Operations.—His first Errors.—Picture of his Court.—His Administration.—Portraits of his Counsellors and of his Ministers.—Total Change in the Administration of Prussia.—Restitution made to the Duke of Mecklenburg.—Consolidation of the German League.*

THE calm which reigned in Europe leaves us time to follow the new King through the details of his internal administration, to examine his court, to paint his qualities, his faults, his weaknesses, to give account of the first operations of his reign, and to develop in the intrigues of courtiers, ever attentive to profit by the weakness of the monarch, his credulous superstition, and his unbounded appetite for pleasure. The great Frederic had assumed the reins of government at the age of twenty-eight—an age at which men are most subject to voluptuousness.—This heroic Prince renounced it, that he might dedicate himself entirely to glory. Frederic William mounted the throne at the age of forty-two. At this period of life reason easily triumphs over the

abated passions;—but this Prince, too much depressed by the severity of his uncle, as soon as he was King, thought only how he might enjoy with transport all the pleasures which had been forbidden him; and in his eyes the pleasanter use of his power consisted in abandoning himself without reserve to all his desires.

Although the experience of every age has taught that the successors of great men do not supply their places—Frederic William had given his subjects reason to conceive the most flattering hopes. It was believed that his reign would be as glorious, and more mild, than that of his uncle;—that he would enjoy the same military glory, without exercising the same severity.—It was recollected that his education had been entrusted to M. de Borck, an informed military man, and to M. Bequelin, a distinguished academician. His campaign against the Austrians in the war for the succession of Bavaria was not forgotten, nor the eulogy bestowed on him by Frederic. This Prince, so severe towards his family, so avaricious of praise, or jealous of the talents he employed; and so great a connoisseur in the art which he had perfectionated; had charged his nephew to withdraw from Bohemia, a body of the army menaced by superior force; the  
position

position was critical ; the retreat was difficult and dangerous. Frederic William performed it with equal courage and skill. The King, transported, exclaimed, as he embraced him in presence of the army, “ I no longer consider you as my nephew, but as my son : you have effected all that I could have done in your place.” The Prince-royal, admiring the great qualities of his uncle, but disapproving his unjust rigours, was supposed never to have broken his word—his probity excited confidence ; it was said he desired to merit the surname of Well-beloved.—The part which he is known to have taken in the Germanic league, augured well of his political conduct, and he had given the first idea of this league, which flattered the vanity of the Prussians, by making them the protectors of the liberty of Germany against the ambition of the House of Austria.—In a word, every thing conspired to render the *début* of the new monarch easy and brilliant ; peace reigned every where, and towards it all hearts were open. The first moments of his reign answered the general expectation ; each word he dropped, every letter he wrote, and the first orders which he gave, repeated every where, and every where approved ; spread an universal joy, and confirmed the hopes which

his accession to the throne had generally inspired. Without affecting to be learned, the general opinion was, that he had studied a great deal, and that he would patronize letters. His endeavours to retain the Abbé Raynal in Berlin had done him much honour, and his eagerness to see that bold and profound author, led to a belief that he loved to be told truth.

On the 17th August, 1786, as soon as the Prince-royal was informed of the death of Frederic II. he repaired to Potsdam, and examined for some time in silence the inanimate remains of the great man who had just terminated his career. After having dropped a few tears to his memory, he decorated his oldest and most able minister, the Count de Herztberg, with the order of the Black Eagle, opened the dispatches of the King, and hastened to answer them himself, according to the custom of his predecessor. —Removed for a long time from the councils, by the distrust of his uncle; avoiding all connexion with men who might have enlightened him, because he feared ruining them in the opinion of the monarch; he lived absolutely inflated, and knew neither the situation of affairs, nor the men who ought to direct him. In this difficult situation he immediately took  
I the

the wisest measure; and gave his confidence to ministers, whose abilities had contributed to render his uncle's reign illustrious. In thanking them for their services, he engaged them to redouble their zeal; and recommended to them to assist him to promote the happiness, and to sustain the glory, of his country. His purpose, he said, was to preserve peace with his neighbours, to restrain their ambition, to support the honour of the Prussian arms; never to undertake an unjust war, to exercise the strictest discipline among his troops, and at no time to make an arbitrary use of his authority; that he wished to govern by justice, and would not suffer any one of his subjects to complain of the slightest oppression.—He reproached the secretaries of the cabinet with their indiscretions, and enjoined them to be more circumspect in future.—His first employments were the reformation of abuses, acts of justice, and favours conferred with discernment. He travelled over several provinces, confirmed or restored privileges, liberally bestowed succours, diminished taxes, and flattered the national vanity by manifesting his taste for German literature, and by granting favours to some writers who had contributed to its celebrity.

Fredéric

Frederic II. had lent the Duke of Mechlenburg an hundred thousand crowns, for which that Prince had mortgaged four extensive bailiwicks, where the King placed some hussars, who there lived and recruited at discretion.—These terrified states would gladly have delivered themselves from this dependance by paying the sum borrowed, but this the monarch had always refused.—The new King restored the bailiwicks to the Duke; and when he was praised for this act of justice, he moderately replied, “I have only done my duty;—it is “the motto of my order:—*Suum cui que*.”—The Poles, at the time of the partition, might with justice have added the word “*rapuit*.”—He also repaid the Jew Ephraim two hundred thousand crowns, which he owed him, and honourably discharged all the debts which he had contracted when Prince-royal. The union of the Germanic confederacy might have been disturbed by an unexpected quarrel betwixt the Landgrave of Hesse and the Count de Lippe: the tribunal of the empire had decided against the Landgrave; the King of Prussia was to execute the decree. This execution might have met with some resistance, and have occasioned divisions. Frederic William wisely conciliated

conciliated the two parties, and put an end to this dispute. The operations which gave the greatest satisfaction in the interior were, the freedom granted to the commerce of grain, and to the sale of sugar; the abolition of the administration of tobacco, which prohibited its culture; the suppression of the monopoly for supplying the army; and that of the obligation imposed on the country people, to lodge the troops gratuitously. The funds destined for individuals were augmented; five millions of crowns were employed to construct public edifices, to re-imburse losses of individuals, and to succour the unfortunate. Far from appearing to be afraid of his ministers, and of seeking to divide them, the King re-established the ancient directory which his uncle had suppressed; he repelled the attempts of intriguers by whom he was at first surrounded, telling them: "I have suffered alone, I will govern alone."—The kingdom was one vast prison for its inhabitants; he permitted all young persons, desirous of cultivating knowledge, to quit it, and to travel. In a word, he allowed the provincial states the right of revising the new ordinance; and, in his letters to the Chancellor Cramer, discovered the laudable intention of rendering justice

justice more impartial, more expeditious, and less expensive.

The same principle of order, of mildness, and equity, induced him to publish two edicts for the liberty of conscience, and that of the press. But his intention on these two points was too adverse to passion and prejudice to be successful; and those two documents, which may be seen at the end of this volume, were adapted to a construction directly contrary to the end which the King seemed desirous of attaining.

In fact, in the edict of conscience, in confirming the freedom of worship, of the Catholic, Reformed, and Protestant churches; and the toleration of the sects of Jews, Moravians, and Mennonites; from this principle, that each individual is intrusted with the care of his own salvation, and that no power has any right to interfere therein; the king forbids the introduction of any other worship into his dominions; he prohibits all change, all reform in those which are professed in Prussia; and although he permits the change of religion, he forbids all sects, under severe penalties, making any proselytes.—He declares himself strongly against deists, philosophers, and even naturalists, and interdicts their right of maintaining their opinions.

The

The edict of censure presents contradictions still more strange; it consecrates the liberty of the press for the encouragement of literary men in the pursuit of truth; but it establishes a condemnation the most partial and severe, by ordaining, on pain of fine and confiscation, that none shall write any thing touching theology, and philosophy, without permission from the priests; and that writings on medicine and surgery shall alike be submitted to the Colleges of Physic and Surgery; writings on political economy and government to the College of Justice; dramatic works, novels, poems, to the University; and political writings, to the department for Foreign Affairs. This liberty of the press very much resembles that of those enslaved soldiers, who being asked what they were, replied, Nassau-volunteers. The political errors of these two edicts, which render their contents so opposite to their titles, should not prevent us from doing justice to the motives of Frédéric William: all his intentions, all his conduct, at the commencement of his reign, were mild, wise, and beneficent. It were to be wished this first zeal had continued; but, as historians, we shall soon have to fulfil a rigorous duty: and to this smiling prospective, which impartiality obliges us to present, we shall  
be

be compelled to *substitute* the sad picture of a total abandonment, of a shameful carelessness, and of an unbounded weakness; obscenity in pleasures, intrigue in council, prodigality in expences, blindness in choice, the most superstitious credulity, the most puerile vanity, joined to the most evident incapacity; soon assumed the place of that activity, justice, and wisdom, which, in the first ebullition of fervour, the new King had been forced to display. His zeal cooled almost as fast as the body of his illustrious predecessor; and it was not long before Prussia perceived the immense void left by this immortal shade.

The late King of Prussia, hurried on by his ambition, and by the desire of extending his dominions, and of giving a more solid territorial base to the Prussian power; had often, without scruple, changed his alliances and his friends; connecting himself with France, or England, according to circumstances; and was ready to abandon either of the two powers as it ceased to be useful to him. But the dangers to which he had been exposed, during the seven years war; had at length instructed him with regard to his true interests, and the invasion of his territories by the Russians and the Austrians, as well as that of Hanover by the French; had convinced him

him that the hostility of France, might ruin Prussia, whilst the money of England, would not be able to save it. Hence, after the peace of Húbertsburg, the constant aim of his politics had been to strengthen his connection with the cabinet of Versailles, and to break the alliance of that court with the court of Vienna. The dispute betwixt the Emperor and the Dutch, for an instant inspired him with hopes of succeeding. The pretensions of Joseph II. to Bavaria, prepared men's minds; M. de Vergennes, minister of France for foreign affairs, was sufficiently disposed to this. But the influence of Queen Marie Antoinette, prevented the complete effect of that political revolution, which might, perhaps, have altered the chain of events, and spared Europe the sanguinary spectacle of which it is now the theatre. But although France had not broken her alliance with Austria, its ties were very much relaxed; and for some years the French ambassadors in all countries, received orders from M. de Vergennes, that whilst preserving an appearance of intimacy with the Austrian ministers, they should watch their movements, oppose their ambition, and secretly indicate a more real confidence to the Prussian ministers. Such was the situation of affairs when Frederic William II

succeeded his uncle ; and it was natural to suppose, that employing the same ministers, he would pursue the same system. But as he was weak, intrigue soon superseded policy in his court ; and the general interest, was soon lost sight of, in that of individuals.

Prince Henry, the King's uncle, an enlightened statesman, and a skilful general, loving peace, and ably conducting war ; expected to possess great influence over the mind of his nephew ; whom he had superintended, and often consoled, in the retirement to which he was doomed by the severity of the late King. But he did not dissimulate his views ; he hazarded too soon the display of a credit which he had not obtained ; his pride did not sufficiently accommodate itself to that of the monarch, who dreaded as much the appearance, as he felt the necessity of being governed. He wished for confidence, but obtained only attentions. The uncle forgot the address requisite for a courtier ; he expressed his dissatisfaction imprudently, and thus deprived himself of all means of regaining the ground he had lost. The Duke of Brunswick, who at first excited equal umbrage in the vanity of the new King, was more modest and more prudent ; he placed himself in front with reserve, displayed more zeal than pretension

sion, concealed his resentments, preserving by this prudence the possibility of availing himself of other more favourable circumstances; rightly calculating, that the man of talents, who has nothing against him, is always called upon in critical conjunctures.

The Duke of Brunswick, famed for his activity and his valour during the seven years war, had acquired great reputation in the war of Bavaria, by maintaining the difficult post of Troppau, without check, against all the forces of the Emperor.

His genius and mildness made him generally beloved; his subtle, but faithful policy, inspired confidence; his philosophy, partaking of the ideas of the age, attracted the esteem of the learned. Decent in his pleasures, enlightened in his choice, beneficent without prodigality, economical without avarice; he had in a few years, with a moderate revenue, extinguished forty millions of debt with which his country was loaded. His ties of kindred with the King of England did not blind his policy: like Prince Henry, he adhered to the system of attention to France; and although ambition, which was his ruling passion, had twice induced him to command armies destined to fight against the French; it is certain, that if Frederic William

had suffered himself to be guided by him, the affair of the Stadtholderate would have terminated by negotiation; and Prussia would not have undertaken a war against the French Revolution, conducted without success, and concluded without glory.

Prince Henry and the Duke of Brunswick being removed by the jealousy of the King; their enemy, Count Hertzberg, in the first moments, found himself alone at the head of affairs; Count Fink being fitter for representation than confidence. Hertzberg, forced, for the support of his credit, to adopt a plan directly contrary to that of Prince Henry, gave himself up to England with all the impetuosity of his violent character; and from that moment, as was very justly observed by Mirabeau, (whose work in other respects is nothing but a libel), at Berlin, a man must be an *Antigallican* to be an *Anti-Henry*. This change was quickly known at Versailles; from that instant, the French Cabinet contracted closer engagements with Austria; made advances to Russia; sustained with more warmth the cause of the Dutch patriots against the Stadtholder; and thus it was that a rivalry between courtiers, changing the policy of Europe, contributed to accelerate the progress of the  
the

the great events, by which it was to be overturned.

If the King had not committed the error of yielding to this intrigue, but had totally and constantly been guided by Hertzberg, it is probable that his reign would have been stormy, but glorious. History ought to be impartial; and while we condemn the faults of this imperious, vain, passionate, sharp, and vindictive minister; we must allow that he combined profound knowledge with vast designs. If he wanted the necessary capacity for the accomplishment of his plans, Prussia possessed a sufficient number of men of talents to execute them; and, as will be seen in the sequel, the few events which have thrown some lustre on the reign of Frederic William, ought to be ascribed entirely to this minister. If he undertook the Revolution of Holland with imprudence, he completed it with rapidity and success. By the celerity of this success he diminished the importance of France; he humbled the pride of Catherine II. by granting to the Poles a glimpse of independence and liberty; he saved the Turks from total ruin, by threatening the Court of Vienna with an invasion of Bohemia, whilst he raised insurrections against it in Belgium and in Hungary; and, perhaps, the fall of the House of

Austria might have been the result of his bold measures; had not the versatility of the King of Prussia suddenly stopped short, just when he was about to gather the fruit of his efforts. The same jealousy which had given him the power, deprived him of it; and Hertzberg, who governed too ostentatiously, was speedily precipitated from his place, by mistresses whom he had affronted, and favourites whom he had despised. With him was eclipsed the glory of his master. Leopold resumed his security and his influence; Russia her projects; and the Court of Berlin, which was the centre of European politics, became the shameful theatre of inferior intrigues, of abortive schemes, of depredations without an object, and of scandalous scenes, over which we shall pass the more rapidly, as they are rather subjects for satire than for history.

Symptoms of the King's weakness were quickly perceived; he could scarcely endure, even for a short time, the constraint which he had imposed on himself. It was soon understood, that his hours of business and of retirement were regular only in appearance; that his days were idle, and his nights dedicated to infamous orgies. He had repudiated his first wife, the Princess Elizabeth of Brunswick, on account of misconduct. The prudence of the Princess of

Hesse; his second wife, did not shelter her from disgrace; but though she was not dismissed, she suffered, perhaps, more from the public triumph of her rivals. The King had loved a Madame de Rietz, celebrated for the licentiousness of her manners, the baseness of her character, and the infamy of her husband. He never could break this shameful connexion, but lavished titles and treasures on this courtesan, and on a son whom she bore to him, for whose death he was inconsolable.

Notwithstanding this scandalous subjection, having become passionately enamoured of Mademoiselle de Vofs, the niece of Count Fink, he was on the point of marrying her. This he communicated to the Queen, and consulted the Priests, who replied, that it was better to contract an illegal marriage, than to run incessantly from one error to another; an answer which, perhaps, degrades those who gave it, as much as him by whom it was solicited. This marriage, however, did not take place. Mademoiselle de Vofs chose rather to sacrifice her virtue than the glory of her lover. But, a few years after, he renewed the same scandal more completely, by marrying the Countess d'Enhof; thus retaining three legitimate wives and one mistress, whilst he banished the French comedians

dians from Berlin, whom he accused of corrupting the public manners. The alliance of voluptuousness and superstition, constantly astonishes reason, and is constantly renewed. At the same time that the King abandoned himself, without restraint, to the charms of his mistresses, the *Illuminati* acquired an unbounded empire over his mind: he must have been, or seemed to be, an apostle of this sect, in order to gain, or preserve, its favour; for while, on one hand, he treated the Duke of Brunswick, Prince Henry, Mollendorf, and even Hertzberg, Schulemburg, and Fink, who managed his affairs, coolly and without regard; he abandoned himself entirely to Welners, to Bischofswerden, to the Princes of Dessau and Wurtemberg; to Frederic of Brunswick, the Duke of Weymar, and other visionaries, who made Moses and Jesus appear to him; and who, it is said, carried the imposture so far as, at supper, to trace to him the shadow of the ghost of Cæsar.

By amusing his imagination with such illusions, or by terrifying him with such visions, the artful courtiers, humouring his vanity, and availing themselves of his weakness, obtained possession of all influence, without appearing to aspire to power, and insensibly undermined that of the servants of the Great Frederic. The  
effect

effect of the influence of these new counsellors was every where very soon felt: degrees were lavished without discernment; titles prostituted without number. In a little time, as was remarked by a satirical writer, it would have been more difficult in Prussia to find a *man* than a *nobleman*. The army now seldom saw its chief, who could no longer disguise how much he was become tired with military details. The receipts were diminished; the expences multiplied; the treasure encroached on; even the natural good temper of the King was abused, by intrigue, to make him exercise unjust rigours. The French administration of finance, and Launay its chief, had rendered important services; it had, in nineteen years, brought into the treasury forty-two millions five hundred thousand crowns beyond its engagements. It was natural this should excite complaints. It is a duty to relieve the people, and to redress abuses; but those who have scrupulously obeyed, and served with zeal, ought not to be punished. All Frenchmen were dismissed, and succeeded by men without ability: this fault entailed serious consequences. Deprived of so rich a source of revenue, the King adopted a scheme of capitation, which excited violent discontent; but to this he at first adhered with obstinacy. At last,

however, he was obliged to relinquish it, by a bold letter, in which the ministers Hertzberg, d'Arnim, Heinitz, and Schulemburg, expressed themselves in these energetic terms:—*This measure alarms all classes of your subjects, effaces from their hearts the title of well-beloved, and chills the zeal of those whom you have called to your councils.* Such a letter entitles those who wrote it to our esteem; and leaves room to regret, that a Prince, capable of profiting by it, had not confided solely in those ministers.

The revenues of the kingdom were valued at nearly one hundred and eight millions French money, or twenty-seven millions of crowns. The army cost twenty-two, the civil government two millions and a half of crowns; the royal household one million two hundred thousand; pensions one hundred and thirty thousand. But being deprived of the skill of the French in the administration, and having forsaken the rigid economy of the preceding reign, the King saw his receipts fall short of his expences; and, in order to execute the ambitious plans of the politic Hertzberg, he was soon obliged to avail himself of the treasure which Frederic II. had amassed; a treasure which might have defrayed the expence of three campaigns, and secured an  
influence

influence to the Court of Berlin so much ~~more~~ efficient, as at this period all the other governments of Europe, far from being possessed of funds, were overburthened with debts. Men, sincerely attached to their King and country, lamented to see the edifice of Prussian glory crumbling so rapidly to ruins. Confidence diminished, inconsiderateness increased, from day to day. At this time the King paid the Emperor a million of crowns, which he had received from him during the war in Bavaria. Men void of shame, like Mirabeau, were astonished that he should be such a dupe as to return this money to his natural enemy: virtuous people were indignant that he should have been mean enough to have borrowed it of him. The prodigality of his presents to the *Illuminati*; the estrangement of persons of merit; the increasing power of Bischofswerden, whose avidity was not compensated by any talent; the multiplicity of places conferred on Saxons; the violence of the King in his family; his hatred of persons of genius; his familiarity with the lowest domestics, inspired a general dislike and inquietude; and if any one ventured boldly to censure him, or to speak slightly of him, the monarch punished with severity those indiscretions, at which the Great  
Frederic

Frederic would have been contented to smile. So true it is, that nothing is more irritable than mediocrity: the shafts of satire are never pardoned, but when their object is elevated above their reach. These details, of which I have given only a sketch, and to which I shall not revert, were necessary to enable the reader to comprehend many events, which, without this key, would to his eyes have remained covered by an impenetrable veil. Almost all the enigmas of politics might be solved, were we first to study the good or bad qualities of those by whom they are directed; for the passions and weaknesses of the governors have always more influence over events, than the interest of the governed; and the versatility, the indolence, and the vanity, of Frederic William II. being known, it will be easier to explain why he abandoned the Turks, the Poles, the People of Liege, the Brabanters, and the Swedes, after having excited them to take up arms; why he became the ally of Austria, after having prepared her ruin; why, after having placed himself, like Agamemnon, at the head of the Kings who wished to invade France; he was the first to abandon the coalition, and to make a treaty with the Revolutionists, whose destruction

destruction he had vowed; and lastly, why, after having participated in the division of Poland, which he had excited to refuscitation and liberty; he became indifferent to all the disturbances of Europe, and died without glory, and unregretted, in the midst of the flame he had kindled,

**CHAP.**

## CHAP. III.

*Formation of a Camp of Eighty Thousand Austrians in Bohemia in 1787.—Projects of Catherine against Courland.—Her Declaration on the Affairs of Dantzick.—Conclusion of a Treaty of Commerce betwixt France and Russia.—Breach of that betwixt Russia and England.—Journey of Catherine to the Crimea.—Interview with the King of Poland.—Journey of Joseph II. to the Crimea.—Armament of the Turks and Russians.—Grievances of those two Empires.—Uneasiness which this Journey occasioned in Europe.—England and Prussia advise the Turks to go to War.—France wishes to persuade them to Peace.—Declaration of War by the Turks.—Troubles in Brabant.—Assembly of the Notables in France.—Fermentation in Poland.—Affairs of Holland.*

THE Court of Russia, tranquillized by the death of the Great Frederic, whose genius, ambition, and resentment, it dreaded, lost no time in giving, by its operations, serious alarms to his successor; and his inquietude was further augmented by the vivid imagination of Hertzberg, which magnified every thing, and always imputed to other powers his own turbulent designs and gigantic views.

Catherine the Second, who governed Courland by her influence, appeared to yield to the desire which Prince Potemkin, her favourite minister, discovered of possessing this Dutchy. On this subject she threw out some threatening

ing insinuations, the effects of which were eluded by the Duke Biren, by giving to Prince Potemkin, and lending to Frederic William, considerable sums of money, to insure the desistance of the one, and the protection of the other. The Prussian Cabinet, which from that moment meditated the project of appropriating Dantzic to itself; prepared for this purpose, by daily troubling the commerce of that city with new rights of tolls established at Fahrvaßer. The Empress of Russia interposed in the contest, and supported the complaints of the Dantzickers, by declarations which announced a firm resolution to oppose the views of the Court of Berlin.—These slight altercations were still far from disturbing the general tranquillity. But a magnificent spectacle, which the vanity of Catherine wished to exhibit to Europe, in the same instant awakened all the fears, kindled all the passions, that Prussia had conceived; which being immediately communicated by her to England, Turkey, and Sweden, war was very soon considered as inevitable, in which all the powers in Europe were very near being involved. It is true, many circumstances combined to render this celebrated journey to the Crimea more alarming, and to give some probability

bability to the projects which the disquietude of the Prussian Ministers attributed to Russia.

Catherine II. thirsting for glory, intoxicated with success, and always occupied in endeavouring, by the splendour of her reign, to efface the remembrance of the stain of her usurpation; had sometimes discovered a romantic wish of driving the Turks out of Europe, and of reviving the eastern empire. Her intrigues in Egypt, her former irruptions into the Peloponnesus, the language of her Consuls in the Archipelago; the education which she afforded to a number of young Greeks, brought to Petersburg, the name of Constantine borne by one of her grandsons; the conquest of the Crimea, the ancient names which she had restored to that country; the formation of a powerful fleet at Kherfon and Sevastopol; had sufficiently unveiled her secret designs; which she probably would have executed, if she had been possessed of as much money, as ambition; and if the continual opposition of France, had not deterred her, by the dread of failing in the enterprise, and by this madness of rashly exposing a power, which possessed more show than solidity.—But latterly, Austria, more interested than any other power in resisting this project, had appeared to favour it; and the Emperor, Joseph

Joseph II. in order to purchase the alliance of Catherine, and deprive the Court of Berlin of her support, seemed disposed to promote the ambition of the Empress: he had consented to the invasion of the Crimea; and the Court of France, which at first opposed it with energy, had the weakness of yielding to the menaces of the two Imperial Courts.

Another event, although foreign to all these circumstances, increased the uneasiness of Prussia and England.—For forty years, the Cabinet of Versailles saw, with indignation, the commerce of the North exclusively possessed by the English, who covered the Baltic with their ships, and inundated the Russian Empire with the productions of their industry. All the merchandize of France was imported into the North in Dutch and English vessels. The wines of France were subject to exorbitant duties, and the French merchants were obliged to pay these duties in rix-dollars, whilst the English paid in the money of the country, which made a difference of twelve per cent. in their favour. These fetters banished our ships from the Baltic; and as Russia alone supplied the maritime powers with hemp, and materials necessary for their navies, France was compelled to receive these indispensable supplies only through  
the

the deceitful and avaricious hands of her natural enemies. All the French Ambassadors had successively attempted, but in vain, to extricate their country from so disadvantageous a situation. Segur, Minister of France, was more fortunate in his endavours; he availed himself of the growing animosity, excited against England by the accession of King George as Elector of Hanover to the Germanic league; the ties of that Prince with Prussia, and the obstinate refusal of the British Cabinet to recognize the principles of the armed neutrality; and, in the beginning of the year, 1787, he signed, with the Russian Ministers, a treaty of commerce, that secured to France all the advantages which, till then, had been exclusively enjoyed by the English.

This treaty, which prevented the renewal of that with England, made no alteration, as will presently be seen, in the political system of the Court of France, and its determination to defend the Ottoman Empire. But it was otherwise interpreted by the uneasiness of the Prussians, and the acrimony of the English; by whom it was considered as a change of system, and as having a tendency to connect itself with the Russians, and to abandon the Turks. What the more accredited this opinion, was the departure

capture of Catherine II. for the Crimea, which took place a few days after signing the treaty; and the alarm was redoubled in London and at Berlin, when it was understood that Prince Potemkin had collected an hundred thousand men in the Ukraine, and in the Crimea; that the King of Poland had an interview with Catherine near Kief\*; and that Joseph II. who was to meet that Princess at Kherfon, ordered a camp of seventy thousand men to the frontiers of Silesia.

As all independent powers are, with respect to each other, in a state of nature, and consequently ever in a state of distrust; since they have no judges, and the law of nations being but an imperfect code, force most frequently holds the place of law and justice.—There exists in politics a great truth, which is felt equally in the interior of all countries torn by factions; which is, that each party continually exaggerates the injuries and the views of the adverse party; and that fear always bewildering the judgment, and rendering explanations difficult, and accommodations impossible; each combats chimeras of its own creation, and finishes by realizing dangers, which never existed.

\* Kiow.

So it happened precisely in this conjuncture ;—appearances were taken for realities, and the dread entertained of war, was the occasion of it. The uneasiness excited by the dispositions of Russia and Austria, and the preparations for the journey into the Crimea, did not disturb the tranquillity of the Turks, the English, and Prussians alone ; even France and Spain, although less irritated, and more in a condition to view matters dispassionately, partook of these alarms. The Cabinet of Versailles ordered its agents to keep the strictest watch ; and the Minister of France at Petersburg, who was to attend the Empress in her journey, and who had a better opportunity of knowing the truth ; was himself so much deceived by the movements of which he was witness, and by the numerous and different accounts which he received ; that he communicated his apprehensions to the French Ambassador at Constantinople ; and determined the Porte to put Otchakof \* in a state of defence, and to assemble an army of an hundred and fifty thousand men on the Danube.—It has been said, that the greatest events are produced by the most trifling causes. This truth must be eternal, since all the affairs of this world are directed by men, and these

\* Oczakow.

men

men are constantly subject to the weakness of humanity, and are governed by their passions.

Prince Potemkin, so much the more envied, as he was more powerful, had abused his influence too much not to have enemies; and the courtiers, who dared not attack him openly, sought secretly to shake his credit.

He had just triumphed, and not without difficulty, over an intrigue contrived against him by the favourite Yermolof; he had no uneasiness respecting the views of the Aid-de-camp Momonof, who was recently obliged to him for favours. But he could not observe, without pain, that Catherine II. satiated with military glory, now employed her whole thoughts on legislation; and he perceived, with inquietude, the efforts which were daily made to inform the Empress that her army was disorganised, her subjects discontented, her commerce without activity, her finances exhausted, and that the southern provinces, which she had conquered, were merely deserts. Potemkin was not ignorant of the easy art of deceivers, of the vanity of women, and Kings; and, in order to remove his Sovereign from his rivals, he resolved on engaging her to make a triumphal progress through her new posses-

sions; sure of fascinating her eyes by his deceptions, of astonishing her by the rapidity of her journey, and surrounding her with troops and people of all countries, and of all colours; by flattering her pride with the homage of several Sovereigns, and to intoxicate her by the magnificent illusions, with which he took care she should be continually environed. Such was the sole and secret motive of this romantic journey, which alarmed all Europe, and of which a war almost general was the result.—The sequel of the present narrative will prove the truth of this assertion, and demonstrate that Catherine II. entertained only vague and distant ideas as to the conquest of the Ottoman Empire; that she had postponed the execution of it to a more favourable opportunity; and that, far from wishing a rupture at this period, she dreaded such an event; and, in order to avoid it, condescended to make sacrifices, which may seem incompatible with her pride.

This journey, so pompously announced, was executed with the utmost magnificence, and nothing was neglected to conceal from the observation of the Empress, wretched realities, under the most brilliant appearances; the roads illuminated by innumerable faggots, for the space of five hundred leagues, made her almost forget

forget the darkness of the days in that rigorous season. Allegiance and curiosity attracted on the road a crowd of merchants, summoned from all the provinces, which gave the country an appearance of population, and a seething activity to commerce.—Complaints were every where stifled, homage multiplied, and acclamations commanded. All the towns, by balls and illuminations, presented a spectacle of joy. The Clergy, fearing to lose what revenues they retained, made the pulpits resound with flattery, which are consecrated to the promulgation of truth; and, as far as Kief, the progress of Catherine was nothing but a continuation of pleasure and entertainments.

On entering the province governed by the old Marshal Romantzof, every thing seemed to change its appearance, and to assume a melancholy aspect: Potemkin, jealous of that celebrated General, had the address to leave him in want of every thing necessary for a splendid reception of his Sovereign. The funds destined to repair the buildings had been distributed so late, that Kief exhibited only a mass of ruins: the imposts exacted with severity, inspired a general discontent; the troops under the command of the Marshal were neither complete nor new-clothed.—The Marshal, incapable of dis-

diffimulation, suffered some harsh expressions to escape him against the prejudices of Catherine, which she attributed only to his jealousy. She was compelled by the ice in the Borysthènes to remain above three months in this dismal country; where her vanity found no other compensation than the homage paid her by foreigners, who arrived from all parts of Europe. At last she quitted this tiresome abode, dissatisfied with Romantzof; embarked on board a fleet as magnificent as that of Cleopatra; descended the Borysthènes, and arrived at the Government of Prince Potemkin, at a moment when nature, decorated by the spring, seemed to conspire with the artful minister to banish the remembrance of the melancholy of Kief; and to spread a magic charm, over all the objects which presented themselves to her curiosity.—On her way she met the King of Poland, who had caused the right bank of the river to be illuminated, and who was obliged to receive with pomp, an Empress to whom he was indebted for his crown; and who was a few years afterwards to precipitate him from the throne on which she had placed him. The interview was short and dry. She coldly received the forgotten lover; she treated with harshness a King, whose weakness she despised; and Stanislaus Augustus, having  
obtained

obtained only vague promises of protection, and an order for the departure of some Russian regiments who tyrannized over his country; hastened to the Emperor Joseph, to lay before him the apprehensions which he entertained of a new partition. The Emperor revived his confidence by a solemn promise, which was very soon violated by one of his successors.

Whilst the Empress advanced towards the south, the disquietude occasioned by her journey continued to increase. The convention concluded betwixt Russia and the Porte, by the mediation of the two French Ambassadors, was not faithfully observed. The Turks persisted in supporting the Lefghis. The Russians, in order to punish the Tartars, had pursued them into the Cuban. Potemkin had ordered the Russian Minister Bulgakof to assume a threatening tone, in order to compel the observance of the convention. Bulgakof obeyed this order, without communicating with Choiseul Gouffier; and the Turks, ignorant of this retention; irritated by the Ministers of Prussia and England, and terrified by the approach of the Empress; believed that France had made not only a treaty of commerce, but a treaty of alliance with Russia; and that she was in league with that Power, to complete the ruin of the Ottoman Empire. The Grand

Vizier pressed Choiseul to explain himself categorically; and the Minister Segur having received instructions, declared formally to the Court of Russia, that the King of France could not, with indifference, see the non-performance of an arrangement made by his intervention; and that he should impute the breach of it to the Russian Cabinet, unless Bulgakof frankly communicated all his measures to Choiseul, and the grievances of which the Court of Russia complained. To a declaration so explicit, the Empress hastened to grant the satisfaction required, respecting Potemkin, for his precipitation; and commanded Bulgakof to communicate with the French Ambassador, and to concert with him all the means proper for preserving peace.—The courier who carried these dispatches, and those of the French Minister, was attacked and killed by robbers near Adrianople; and this unforeseen accident occasioned the most serious consequences. Choiseul not receiving an answer in time, and pressed by the Turks to explain himself, advised the Grand Vizier to prepare for war; and to render his armament more formidable, he even sent French officers, engineers, and ships, to Otchakof. Bulgakof, on his part, continued his threats; and the Prussian Minister, instigated by

by Ainsley, the Ambassador of England, increased the alarm and inquietude of the Divan to such a degree, that from this moment every disposition was made for an almost unavoidable rupture.

Whilst this animosity made such rapid progress, the Emperor Joseph II. who had gone to meet Catherine at Catherinossaw, accompanied that Princess to Kherfon and the Crimea; and this crowned courtier inflated the pride of the Empress, by praises which he politically lavished on the new colonies; the labours, and the naval creations of Prince Potemkin; although he clearly perceived this imposture and its want of solidity. Whilst the two sovereigns were travelling over Tartary, occupied only with entertainments and pleasure, Bulgakof, and the Imperial Intendant Herbert, arriving from Constantinople, acquainted Catherine that Prussia and England were urging the Porte to go to war; and Joseph II. was at the same time informed that the Belgic provinces had revolted, and that Prussia secretly fomented the insurrection. The French Minister, availing himself of this circumstance, easily made the Emperor sensible of his danger; and insinuating to him that France, interested in the preservation of the Ottoman Empire, might unite with Prussia

to

to prevent its destruction; he determined that Prince immediately to assure him, not only that he would never consent to the ruin of the Turks, whose danger he felt as connected with his own; but that he would also cease to flatter the Empress with the hope of reviving the Greek Republics; for that republican and philosophical project had entered into the heads of the two most powerful despots in Europe. This fact is as certain as it may appear singular; and serves to prove to what a degree the ideas of the age, and the spirit of liberty, had advanced, even in the minds of those who had the greatest reason to dread its explosion.

Almost all the statesmen of Europe were deceived by this circumstance, and the majority of them still persist in the same error. They think that the war, which ensued shortly after, was the result of the ambition of the two Imperial Courts; which, during their journey, had concurred to complete the ruin of the Ottoman Empire. But it is certain, that the Emperor Joseph did not wish it; that he was terrified by the troubles in Brabant; and feared, if a rupture should happen, either to lose the alliance of Russia, unless he assisted her, or to be attacked by Prussia, if he joined his arms to those of the Empress. Catherine II. on her part, perceiving the

the embarrassment of her ally, and foreseeing a diversion on the side of Sweden and Prussia; and seeing her own country desolated by a general famine, necessarily postponed her schemes of conquest, and sincerely deprecated war. Accordingly her Minister Bulgakof, and the Austrian Internuncio Herbert, concerted at Sevastopol, with the French Minister Segur, a new plan of conciliation, by which Russia receded from all her pretensions, and acquiesced in all the demands of the Porte. Herbert and Bulgakof departed for Constantinople with this plan of pacification, which was dispatched to, and approved at, Versailles. The Emperor separated from the Empress, and returned to Vienna; and Catherine went back to Petersburg; and every body imagined that tranquillity would be re-established more firmly than ever. But the British Cabinet soon destroyed those hopes; and the Prussian government, directed by its influence, but too successfully assisted its measures.

Whilst Choiseul laboured to restore union betwixt the Russians and Turks; the English and Prussian Ministers representing to the Grand Vizier, that having incurred great expence in collecting an army, he must be ruined if that expence became useless; that the Imperial Courts,

Courts, which deceived him, waited only until the troops of the Grand Signior should be disbanded to attack him; that the moment was favourable for revenging himself on the ambition of the Russians, since the Emperor was occupied by the disturbances in his own dominions; and that the Russian Empire, in want of money, was a prey to the most dreadful famine; the King of Prussia promised to restrain the Emperor; England to assist Sweden. The Poles were urged to shake off the Muscovite yoke; and if France abandoned her ancient allies, at least there was nothing to be feared from her, since her government, embarrassed by the derangement of her finances, had shewn, by convoking the *Notables*, her inability to interfere in the affairs of others. By this dextrous policy, Count Hertzberg at once found means of multiplying the embarrassments of the Emperor, and of punishing Russia, for having quitted the alliance with his master: and the English were persuaded, that in case of a rupture, France would be obliged either to give up the advantages of her treaty with Russia, if she supported the Turks, or to lose her influence in the Levant, if she abandoned them. This machiavelian system and language completely succeeded. The Divan, encouraged by the hopes which

which had been given, and by the support offered to it, far from accepting the proposed plan, rose in its demands; made a proposal, through the medium of Choiseul Gouffier, to the Court of Petersburg, of another plan of conciliation, the articles of which were of a nature to disgust a less irritable vanity than that of Catherine. These new proposals were received by that Princess a few days after her return to Petersburg; and she was so much afraid of such a rupture in the situation in which she then was; that, to the great surprize of the French Minister, she acquiesced, without hesitation, to all the propositions of the Divan. The French Minister was preparing to dispatch a courier to Constantinople, in order to carry this unexpected intelligence, when he learned that the Grand Signior, without waiting for this answer, had sent the Russian Minister to the Seven Towers, and had just declared war against Russia. Thus ceased the transient calm which Europe had enjoyed; and it will soon be seen how this flame, which was kindled in the east, was by degrees extended, and finished by drawing after it an almost universal devastation.

War was scarcely declared, but every power was thinking of the part it would be convenient to take in it.

France

France and Spain, not wishing either to support the aggression of the Turks, or to suffer their entire destruction, determined to remain neutral, and employed their whole endeavours to terminate the war by mediation. The Emperor, who was desirous to avoid the performance of his engagements, seconded the pacific efforts of these two powers; and did not determine on hostilities till he had unsuccessfully exhausted all conciliatory measures. Poland took advantage of these circumstances, in order to prepare for the recovery of her independence. The King of Sweden, affecting an unfounded anxiety, pretended he was afraid of being attacked, in order to cover the aggression which he had in contemplation; and England as well as Prussia, enflaming the courage of the Turks; exciting the hopes of Poland; instigating the ambition of the Court of Sweden: fomenting the troubles of Brabant; deceiving the probity of Spain; and supporting the Stadtholder's pretensions against the States of Holland, made all Europe, in a short time, an immense field of intrigues, of discord, and of carnage.

It is now necessary to quit the east, and turn our view towards Holland, where a revolution was brewing; the various chances, and the rapidity of which, have had but too much influence

influence on the events that have followed; since it every where inflamed the resentments of the friends of liberty, and deceived the absolute governments; by persuading them that the same means, may every where succeed with the same facility.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

*Revolution of Holland.*

THE United Provinces have been always alternately quoted by the adherents to absolute government, and by the friends of liberty, to serve as a support to their different systems; and the partisans of authority have, in the frequent troubles of this country; in the weakness of its government, when it was deprived of a chief; in the zenith of its glory, when the Princes of Orange have saved it by their talents, and rendered it illustrious by their victories; found numerous arguments to prove the danger of the dissemination of powers, and the necessity of their concentration in the hands of a single person. To these reasonings, the Republicans have opposed a picture of the misery and obscurity of these Provinces, when under the dominion of Spain; and that of their splendour and prosperity since they gained their independence. Never, indeed, say they, at any period, or in any place, did Liberty more rapidly extend her power, and make her magic influence more sensibly felt. Spain was the most formidable power in Europe, and her armies were supported  
by

by the thunders of the Vatican. The poor and feeble inhabitants of a small country, daringly ventured to brave Kings, Popes, and the Ocean. Their poverty and their boldness triumph at the same time over all their enemies. Their religion is changed; their independence acknowledged; their country is defended from the attacks of the sea; their navy rivals the navies of England and of France; and their soil, though unfertile, becomes, by the industry of its inhabitants, the centre of the navigation of Europe, and the commercial depository of the riches of the world.

These two pictures are equally faithful, and might equally serve to exhibit the truth, were the spirit of party not, in its nature, blind; and would it listen to eternal reason, which declares, that all excesses are alike dangerous; that uncontrouled liberty is as weak as boundless authority; that anarchy and despotism equally debase the human species, whose talents and dignity they annihilate; that the energy which liberty produces, would be only fatal, were it deprived of the wisdom which preserves it; and that the well-established balance of powers, can alone give a solid basis to the prosperity of a nation, by guaranteeing at once the inhabitants and their property, both from

the dangers of tyranny, and the calamities of licentiousness.

In all times, the same causes uniformly produce the same effects. The love of liberty, well or ill regulated, exalting the minds, and displaying all the faculties of men, must every where multiply strength; and the Dutch, few in numbers, and without money, from the time they resolved to be free, have been warlike, commercial, and rich. An excessive love of independence, produces disorder; weakens strength, by dividing it; and destroys the springs which it uses, by stretching them too tight; thus the divided States General often saw their country invaded by their enemies, and a prey to intestine discord. The evils of anarchy evince the necessity of order; great crises demand great talents; and, on this account, we see the Batavians restore a first magistrate; subject their armies to the orders of a Captain-General; and re-establish their affairs by this salutary concentration of powers.

It is natural to most men, to endeavour to increase their power, and to abuse it. The Princes of Orange were all ambitious; and, by the discontent they excited, causing the gratitude they had inspired to be forgotten, they rendered less solid, that authority which they

wished to extend too far; and they were several times obliged to descend to the rank of private citizens, for having endeavoured to raise themselves above the laws. Such are the constant, and evident causes of the storms, which have successively burst forth in this country; and, in observing dispassionately the events of the Revolution of which we are now to speak; it will be clearly seen, that its uncertain birth, its tumultuous progress, and its rapid completion; can be attributed only to a defect in the balance of powers, to the ambition of the chiefs, to the divisions among the magistrates, and to the licentiousness of the people.

The Republic was ill constituted. Seven provinces, independent, in respect of their internal government, and united only as to matters of peace, war, and alliances, formed a mass far too unsolid. Brabant, Flanders, the *pais de la généralité*, without representation; several towns deprived of the rights, which their original poverty had prevented them from enjoying; the flat country, without any other support than the equestrian order, which had often interests opposite to its welfare; the very uncertain political existence of the Stadtholders, who had too little power by law, and too much influence in fact; produced in the interior of the state,

continual sources of troubles; and always presented to foreigners, easy means to disseminate discord there, and to establish their preponderance.

After the abolition of the Stadholderate, by the celebrated, and unfortunate De Witt, when William III. had been called to deliver Holland from the arms of Louis XIV., that Prince, taking advantage of the enthusiasm which he excited, deprived three provinces of the right of election, under the pretext of punishing them; and, at their expence, increased his power by the regulation of 1674. This regulation, and the right of disposal of the movements of the troops, at his pleasure, for one campaign, were proofs of a confidence rendered necessary by circumstances, and which ought to have ceased with those circumstances. But the Princes of Orange never wished afterwards to relinquish these rights; and unfolding, by this pretension, the desire of perpetuating their dictatorship, they also perpetuated the division which this struggle must naturally excite between the friends of the Republic, and its first magistrate. A new abolition of the Stadholderate was the consequence. The war of 1741, the successes of the enemies, and the weakness of the constitution, made the Dutch again feel the necessity of a Chief. In 1748, they re-established

established the Stadholderate, in the person of William IV. They made it hereditary in his family, and put him in possession of all the privileges of his predecessors; availing themselves of forms equally insufficient to ensure the liberty of the people, and to satisfy the ambition of the Prince. The same cause of mistrust continued, and the calm could not be lasting. The lassitude of the nation, and the wisdom of William IV., prolonged it; but this flame, not well extinguished, again lighted up, by the war of 1778, between France and England, and kept up by the intrigues of these two powers, at length burst out, with violence, in 1786, under the government of William V., who exhibited all the ambition of his ancestors, without inheriting their talents.

When a Prince is dethroned, feeling minds, who abhor all disorder, pity him, and condemn his enemies. Envious men, and those of little minds, who would have flattered him in his grandeur, insult him in his misfortunes. It is the historian's duty to observe the causes of his fall, and to judge him impartially, as he would be judged by posterity; but it must be acknowledged, and experience generally proves it, that a government, long and legally established, is never overturned, but from its own errors, and

before its fall, it must have committed very serious faults; for the authority with which it is invested, gives it numberless means of preventing or repressing revolt; and in this kind of war alone, it is much more easy to defend than to attack.

If we study, with some attention, the character of those Princes, who have lost their power by revolutions, we shall constantly remark the absurd haughtiness which irritates, and the half-energy which provokes, insurrection; the weakness which makes it succeed, and the disposition to revenge, which destroys every means of conciliation, by removing all hope of tranquillity. This mixture of pride, anger, and weakness, composed, as we shall presently see, the character of William V., and of the Princess of Orange, sister of Frederic William II.; and their false measures, the inevitable effects of these errors, irritating, by degrees, a people phlegmatic and difficult to be moved, drew upon them all the misfortunes with which they were overwhelmed, and from which the Prussian arms only gave them a momentary deliverance.

The Princes of Nassau had all readily felt, that inspiring, as they did, a just umbrage in the friends of liberty, by their riches and their power,

power, they ought to employ that power to secure the tranquillity of their country; to increase the commercial prosperity of the Republic; and to make its arms respected. The establishment of the Stadtholderate had solely this object; and it was necessary for every Captain-General to acquire glory, in order to excuse his elevation. The predecessors of William V. had completely understood this truth; and the splendour which they shed over the Republic, had imposed silence on the enemies of their authority. The new Stadtholder lost sight of this great object; and, blinded by a narrow policy, he sacrificed the ambition of glory, which would have made him beloved, to that of power, which made him hated. Few words will suffice to evince this new system, and to develop all its consequences.

The Republic, feeble on the continent, but powerful from its colonies and its commerce, long felt that, placed between France and England, and a victim to the part which it took in their disputes, its true interest was to maintain neutrality, and not to take up arms, except against the power that would absolutely force it into that measure. But the only means of preserving its riches, and making its neutrality respected, was to keep up a formidable navy, and

to exert all its powers to this purpose. France, governed by a pacific King, did not contradict this national disposition, and even wished that the Dutch Navy should be sufficiently powerful, to deprive the English of the proud hope, of the dominion of the seas. France, being no longer conqueror, her land force became but a secondary object; and this force, always hostile to liberty, was rather diminished than increased. Such was, on this point, the opinion of the Dutch: the views of the Prince, on that subject, were diametrically opposite to those of the nation. The navy was necessary to the Republic, but altogether unnecessary to the power of the Captain-General; he neglected, and was even suspected of wishing to sacrifice it. The land force, useless to the Republic, offered to its head all the means of increasing his authority; it became the sole object of his care: and as England, the natural enemy of every maritime power, entered perfectly into the Prince's views, it thence naturally resulted, that William V. became the determined enemy of the French, and subjected himself to a dependence on the British Cabinet, while his nation became daily, more and more irritated against England, and more united with France.

In

In the mean time, war was declared between France and England: the States-General manifested the wise and firm wish of preserving a neutrality. The English government, thinking itself sure of the compliance and the inactivity of the Prince of Orange, took possession of the Dutch ships, in defiance of the law of nations; and no reprisal was made for that insult. The States-General addressed Catherine II., who put herself at the head of a maritime confederacy of the Northern Nations, to cause respect to be paid to neutral flags, by the Belligerent powers. The Stadtholder, unable to oppose so wise a measure, sent to Russia an Ambassador, of all others the least capable to conduct a negociation, and the most fitted to make it miscarry; but the mission with which he was intrusted, was so easy, that, notwithstanding all the dilatoriness and awkwardness of the Ambassador, the accession to the armed neutrality was signed, to the great dissatisfaction of the Prince and of England. No sooner had the latter power intelligence of the treaty being signed, than she declared war against the Republic; and the Stadtholder found himself obliged to join the French, whom he detested, and to contend with England, which he considered as his support.

Thus,

Thus, forgetting the maxims of his predecessors, and the part which he ought to have played, far from displaying a glorious activity, he exhibited a culpable negligence. Deaf to the cries of the Dutch people, and lending a complying ear to their enemies; abandoning the honour of his flag; and allowing himself to be suspected of being an accomplice of the power he meant to humble; he lost the confidence of his country, and inflamed the indignation of the friends of liberty, who could not endure a Chief, but when he appeared necessary to their glory, and to the safety of the Republic. Ardent minds, ambitious men, factious persons, who, like the winds, are found every where ready to crush a vessel ill conducted, eagerly profited by the pretexts afforded them by the Stadtholderian cant; and every day this Prince, incensed and incapable of dissimulation, furnished fresh food for their hatred, and new occasions for their complaints. He was accused of having given orders to prevent the junction of the small force, which the Republic had at sea. Zoutmann and Kinsberg, listening only to their zeal, and in disobedience to their instructions, formed a junction, and defeated the English. This battle of the Dogger-bank, at once excited the enthusiasm of the Dutch, and  
their

their resentment against the Stadtholder, who was so impolitic as to give a bad reception to the victors, and not to conceal the dissatisfaction he felt on this national triumph. Never after, during the war, did he give an opportunity to the Republican fleets to gather laurels; peace was concluded in 1783; and the States-General, irritated against England, and reckoning only on the assistance of France, which then terminated, at her expence, a contest that had taken place between the Emperor Joseph and the Republic, concluded with Louis XVI. an alliance, which completed the exasperation of the Prince, whose whole political plan was thus defeated.

It was not long before the fermentation, occasioned by his conduct, burst forth. Not satisfied with the prerogatives of his predecessors, he had wished to enlarge them, by writing letters to influence the election of the magistrates of towns, and deputies to the States: he hoped that he might convert this custom into a right; and that, by this means, uniting the legislative power with the executive, his authority would have no bounds; but this was at once too openly unmasking himself, and choosing an improper time for such an innovation. Never were men's minds less disposed to this; and the patriotic

patriotic party, heated by the national discontent, and supported by the French Government, answered these attacks, by forming others against the abuses of the Stadtholderian authority. The abolition of the prerogative arrogated by the Prince, of alone passing through the northern gate of the palace, in order to repair to the hall of the States, was the unimportant commencement of this great dispute. Instead of wisely yielding this frivolous point; or of negotiating, the Prince wished to raise a commotion against the Deputy Gislaer, who had first dared to pass this way.

The tumult was appeased; and from it there resulted, what always happens in civil broils, a plot, which being defeated, gives strength to the party against whom it is formed. The irritated States of Holland, exercising their right of sovereignty, invested a committee with the immediate command of the place. The Prince had it yet in his power to negotiate: the patriotic party, little agreed as to what he might do, uncertain of the majority, having only the militia of the citizens to oppose against the regular troops of the Stadtholder, and dreading the gold of England, and the resentment of Prussia, had made no difficulty of seeking some means of reconciliation, and even offered to divide the command

command, between the civil and the military. But the vanity of the Stadtholder, and of the Princess, immediately destroyed every possibility of accommodation; and the former, forgetting that he was the first subject of the Republic, spoke with the haughtiness of an absolute monarch, whose authority was disowned.

If he had respected republican forms, in wishing to defend even the most contested of his prerogatives, it appeared certain, that the Anti-stadtholderian party would never have been able to obtain the rapid success and increase, which it gained from these impolitic measures. In every country, the men, who wish to raise commotions, are always in the minority; the majority wish for order and peace; they long bear injustice, in order to preserve their tranquillity; and a government must, by its faults, furnish a great number of pretexts to the insurgent party, before it can inflame the minds of this peaceable majority. As soon as the Prince of Orange displayed the pretensions of a King, the States of the different Provinces, opposed him with republican pride; the inhabitants rose in all parts against this impolitic arrogance, and sought to disengage themselves from an improper influence, the dangers of which he himself unfolded. At Utrecht, all the  
magistrates

magistrates were changed: the privileged orders alone rallied on the part of the Prince. In several towns of Gueldres, Over-Yssel, Zealand; Gröningen, and all throughout Holland, the regulation of 1674 was annulled; as was the right of patent, which had invested the Captains-General only with a precarious authority, but which they had wished to render permanent.

The Stadtholder, instead of negotiating respecting these reclamations, by availing himself of the majority which he had in the States-General; in order to balance that which his enemies had acquired in several provincial States, attempted, by an edict, to check the liberty of the press; and, dictating to the illegal and incomplete States of Utrecht, who assembled at Amersfort, the orders which he wished to execute, he sent troops to subject the towns of Haltem and Elburg to his obedience. This act of violence roused all the Republicans, and all the inhabitants of the two cities attacked: old men, women, and children, quitted their homes to preserve their liberty, leaving the conqueror only a desert, and every where spread the consternation and rage which succeeded.

This event was the signal of civil war, which was equally wished for by the English; who could not bear that the Republic should be  
happy

happy and tranquil under the protection of France; and by the keen patriots, who, concealing their views under the pretence of a simple defence of their rights, aimed, in fact, at the entire abolition of the Stadtholderate. The attack directed against Haltem and Elburg produced the most lively fermentation at the Hague: the States of Holland threatened the Prince to deprive him of all his appointments, unless he put a stop to hostilities. He answered, by an insulting excuse, pretending only to have executed the order which he himself had dictated to the States of Amersfort. The irritated patriots proceeded to the suspension of all his powers; the flame of discontent, quickly pervading almost all the provinces, the most complete revolution would have been the inevitable consequence, had not the death of Frederic the Great suddenly changed the face of affairs, and afforded to the Prince of Orange a support, of which he had always been deprived from the wise policy of that great King.

Being sick, he charged the Duke of Brunswick, in the end of 1785, to inform La Fayette, who was then at Berlin, that it was not his intention to support the influence of the English in Holland; that he could assure the Cabinet of Versailles, that his pretensions were confined

confined to preserving an honourable situation to the Stadtholder, and his children; and that he would take no part in that dispute, if France did not insist on the abolition of the Stadtholderate. On that point M. de Vergennes completely satisfied the Court of Berlin. But Frederick William, more alive to the interests of the Princess of Orange, his sister, than to the welfare of his kingdom; and excited by the Count de Hertzberg, who seconded the views of England, because Prince Henry, inclined towards France, sent to the Hague the Count de Goertz, an able, but violent politician, with instructions more adapted to inflame, than to appease, the minds of the Dutch. A mediator, without any person having required his mediation; and giving rather orders than advice; considering the resistance of Republicans, as oppression; treating an independent power as a rebellious province; he inevitably occasioned the war, which his influence, had it been more wisely directed, might have prevented; and exposed himself to the double danger of drawing Prussia into a war with France and Austria, had the Cabinet of Versailles been more energetic; and of completing the ruin of the Prince of Orange, who had only five or six thousand men to oppose to the patriots, the States of Holland having withdrawn

drawn from him their money and their troops, and their Swiss regiments having received orders from the canton of Berne to remain neutral in this dispute. The evidence of the danger of this position prevailed, at length, over the passions of the Count de Hertzberg, the complaints of the Princess, and the arts of England. Frederic William, staggered by the representations of Esterno, the Minister of France, and afraid of the danger into which he might fall by an inconsiderate step; likewise always inclined to repent quickly of the measures he adopted with precipitation; suddenly changed his plans and his language, sent more pacific instructions to his Minister, and directed him to enter on a negotiation, which might have re-established tranquillity in a solid manner; if the machiavelism of Sir James Harris, the resentment of the Princess of Orange, and the weakness of the Court of France, had not united to overturn all the plans of reason, and destroy all the combinations of prudence.

While the Minister Esterno, with judgment, unveiled the truth, to the eyes of Frederic William; France, in order to bring about an accommodation, sent Rainneval to the Hague. This wise and enlightend negociator quickly suc-

ceeded in making the Dutch sensible of the danger into which their ardour led them. The patriots relaxed respecting the articles of the command of the city, and the regulation of 1674; and they made the Stadtholder propositions, the success of which appeared so much the more probable, as they were dictated by France, and approved by the Count de Goertz, who, in conformity to the new instructions of his Court, no longer listened to the artful counsels of the English Minister, Harris. But if this accommodation would consolidate the happiness of the Republic; re-establish, on more sure bases, the authority of the Prince, and the liberty of the people; satisfy Prussia, tranquilize France; and guarantee Europe against the calamities of war; it was too much contrary to the ambitious views of the British Cabinet, for this Court not to endeavour to oppose it by every possible means. France, victorious in America; the ally of Spain and of Austria; the protectress of Holland; the friend of Prussia; enjoying unrivalled influence at Constantinople; subsidizing Sweden; and on the point of forming commercial connections with Russia; was too strong an object of jealousy to these haughty islanders, who cannot enjoy their liberty and their riches in peace; and who wish incessantly

incessantly to disturb the quiet of the continent, from which nature has separated them; while France will, as she ought to do, dispute with them the empire of the seas. Sir James Harris, now Lord Malmesbury, the English Minister, was the most proper man to accomplish, in such circumstances, the views of the Court of London. Active in intrigue, fruitful in projects, indifferent respecting the means, and inveterately hating France; he appeared more animated than the Stadtholder against the patriots; and would have displayed the same ardour for the republican party, if the French had supported the Stadtholder's cause. Peace would destroy all these hopes; civil war would promote them; he therefore sought every means to render reconciliation impossible; and his success was as easy as it was complete.

He had readily seen, that the Stadtholder could not be, himself, either very useful to his friends, or formidable to his adversaries. The pride of the Princess of Orange, and her more hasty and inflammable character, presented to him more certain resources, and of these he profited with ability. Flattering her passions, entering into her views, pitying her misfortunes, and exaggerating her dangers; he soon gained her confidence, and directed her measures. If the

propositions of the States were not altogether acceptable, they were at least of a nature to deserve discussion, and evidently shewed the desire and the possibility of a reconciliation. Harris dreaded the result: any negotiation might bring about an agreement, or avert the explosion, he wished. To break it off, he prevented the Prince from discussion; and, by his advice, the Princess of Orange, who, as a public character, was not known in the Republic, herself answered the Prussian Minister; announced, that her husband rejected all the propositions; and declared, that the only means of re-establishing tranquillity, was to restore things entirely to the footing on which they had formerly been; to render to the Prince, without reserve, all the improper privileges, which he considered as incontestible rights; and to retract all the errors committed by the States. An answer, so completely negative; a measure so unforeseen; a conduct so unconstitutional; exasperated all minds, inflamed the rage of men attached to liberty, gave a majority to the party wishing to abolish the Stadtholderate, and reduced to silence the friends of peace; who could no longer, without shame, speak of an accommodation, that had been refused in a manner so insulting. The explosion produced

produced by this event, broke off all negotiation. Goertz returned to Berlin, and Rainneval to Paris. The Prince of Orange advanced his troops, and endeavoured to seduce those of the States of Holland. The patriots took up arms, threw forces into the city of Utrecht; the Republic became a field of battle, and every one of her assemblies was a theatre of intrigue and discord.

At Amsterdam, and at Rotterdam, all the Magistrates were changed, and the Revolution was complete. The Stadtholder wished to cut off the communication between Utrecht and Holland. His troops encountered those of the States on the 9th of May, 1787, at Jufphatz; and the patriots, commanded by Averhoults, beat the Prince's forces, and obliged them to retreat. The States of Holland then declared the union dissolved; and the Prince answered their manifesto, by issuing an order to the States of Utrecht, to defend their Province against the invasion threatened by that of Holland. The Stadtholder, at this moment, saw almost all the particular States of the provinces against him; but the majority of the States-General often inclined in his favour; and this uncertainty in their resolutions, offering no solid prospect to the army, a party of the

officers and soldiers adhered to the Prince's standard; Sir James Harris, supporting the Stadtholderian Court, with his money and intrigues, put in motion the populace in several towns, and excited commotions in favour of the Prince of Orange. The Hollanders, in order to resist their attacks, external and internal, formed free corps; and, to give their proceedings more force and rapidity, they invested a committee of a few persons, with an almost dictatorial power. In this state of things, it must be evident, to the dullest capacity, that the fate of the Republic would depend on the conduct of Prussia, and of France.

The patriots and the Stadtholder were equally deficient in prudence and address. The Prince too openly unmasked his desire of obtaining the absolute power, which the constitution denied him; he irritated the parties, whom he ought to have managed and divided, and he had not sufficient means to subjugate his enemies. The patriots, ill agreed, and consulting their passions more than the national will, far from confining themselves to a salutary reform, openly aimed at the abolition of the Stadtholderate. They had neglected to take the means necessary for securing a majority in the States-General; and this fault

fault paralised all the measures, which required the closest union, and the greatest celerity.

Their forces were, besides, too few to accomplish their plans; they had the imprudence to intrust them to the Rhingrave of Salm, a man of genius, intrigue, and activity; but a soldier without reputation, and a politician without morality; who adopted the plan of expelling the Prince of Orange, only in the hope of succeeding him; and who ceased to serve the Republican party with fidelity, as soon as he was convinced that they would not have a Chief. This Rhingrave of Salm, having persuaded the leading people at the Hague, that he had a great deal of interest at Versailles, and those at Versailles, that he had considerable influence in Holland; obtained, in fact, in both countries, what he desired: he ended, by betraying both; and was one of the principal causes of the ruin of the States, which would probably have been saved, had they given their full confidence to the virtuous and brave Vanrissel; but their blindness was their destruction. In this equilibrium of faults, and bad management, it is to be believed, that both parties, too weak to destroy each other, would have been obliged to come to an accommodation, if Prussia and France had been united to advise them; or if

neither of them had wished to meddle in their disputes. Sir James Harris quickly felt, that, either in the one or the other case, all his views would be destroyed, and that he must absolutely determine Frederic William to take an active part in this contest. This enterprize did not appear easy. The King of Prussia could not but dread engaging in a war, that would draw on him the arms of France, united with those of Austria and Russia. But Harris knew, that the little passions have more power over men of moderate talents, than great political interests. He made use of means, apparently puerile; but the best adapted to the nature of the instruments, of which he meant to avail himself, and to the character of the monarch, whom he wished to expose.

At the time, when men's minds were most animated, in the midst of the tumult of camps, the cry of factions, and the shock of arms; the Princess of Orange, without any previous negociation, and without notice to any magistrate; set off coolly from Loo, and took the road to the Hague; where the populace, excited by Sir James Harris, were disposed to revolt. It is easy to conceive, the surprise which must have been occasioned by this unforeseen journey, at a moment when the Stadtholder was di-

vested of all his employments, by the States of Holland, and when his troops were at war with those of that province. The Princess, having arrived at the frontier, was stopped, by a military post, at Welche-fluis. She was treated with every respect due to her rank; but was not permitted to continue her route. She complained loudly to the States, of the obstacles opposed to her journey; and wrote to the King, her brother, to make him consider her arrestation as an outrage, which he ought to revenge.

Sir James Harris had foreseen, that if the States suffered the Princess to proceed to the Hague, their weakness, and her presence, inflaming the populace, it would be easy to excite a revolt, which might crush the patriotic party; and that, if she was stopped on her journey, the King of Prussia, who had more vanity than prudence, would be irritated by this insult, and believe his honour interested to revenge the affront. The event justified his expectation. Frederic William ordered his Ambassador, Thulemeyer, to exact from the States an exemplary satisfaction for his sister, and to threaten them with war, in case of refusal.

The effect of this English intrigue, was to produce a great commotion in Europe. The King of Prussia ordered twenty thousand men  
to

to march into Westphalia, under the command of the Duke of Brunswick. France was to assemble an army at Givet; and England armed, to support the cause of the Stadtholder. The patriots of Holland, in order to prevent this explosion, attempted a last means of reconciliation; and at a conference, held at the house of the French Ambassador, Giflaer, the most eloquent, the most able, and the most insinuating, of his party, after having justified, in the presence of Thulemeyer, the conduct of the States, and proved, that it was dictated by prudence, and regulated by wisdom; explained with perspicuity all the facts which had deprived the Stadtholder, not only of the confidence, but even the esteem, of the nation; and demonstrated, that any reconciliation with him, was now impossible; but, at the same time, he notified to the Ambassador, that it was possible for a reconciliation to take place with the Princess and her children, and to invest them with the offices, and the authority, which the Prince of Orange had irrevocably lost. This hint, which was approved by France, did not appear disagreeable to the Prussian Minister; and if this plan, which might please Frederic William, had been conceived, and farther developed, it might, perhaps, have succeeded; but it was too

too late. The King of Prussia, staggered, at first, by the dread of a war with France, had, at length, formed his resolution: the indecision of the Cabinet of Versailles, had emboldened that of Berlin; and Thülemeyer, after receiving fresh orders from the King, demanded that the States should write a letter of apology to his sister, and submit their differences with the Stadtholder, to the partial and interested mediation of England, and Prussia; which rendered the mediation of France totally illusory. The States, reduced to despair, could not yet think themselves abandoned by the Court of Versailles; they solicited the succours, that had been promised them; but they might, from that moment, have foreseen that this promise would be unfulfilled; when they received, at the same time, from that Court, the timid counsel, both to write the letter of apology required, and to accept the mediation of their enemies. The proposal of writing a letter of apology to the Princess, overwhelmed the patriots with despair: it was equally disgraceful to accede to, and dangerous to refuse it.

After long and tumultuous deliberations, they determined to send a deputation to Berlin, to explain their conduct, and appease the resentment

ment of the King; and they employed Paulus, a firm and skilful Republican, to press the arrival of the succours, which had been promised by Louis XVI. The fate of the Republic seemed to depend on the success of these two negotiations; and the States thought they should have time, either to avert the war, or to be prepared for it; but, to their great surprise, Thülemeyer demanded, within four days, the most explicit apology to the Princess, and the punishment of the most esteemed patriots; declaring, at the same time, that, on the expiration of this term, the Prussian troops, in case of refusal, or hesitation, should enter the territory of the Republic. This declaration removed the veil, which covered the eyes of the Hollanders; they saw clearly, that the negotiations were illusory, and that the loss of their independence was determined. The consternation produced by this event, was suddenly succeeded by fury: every one ran to arms; and the patriots, hoping that France, being offended, would, at length, take up their defence with energy, flattered themselves, that the resistance of Utrecht; the difficulty of the country; the courage of the nation; and the inundations, which had preserved them from the yoke of Louis

Louis XIV, would oppose sufficient obstacles to the arms of the King of Prussia, and the vengeance of the Stadtholder.

All their calculations proved false; all their resources failed at once; and all their deceitful hopes vanished in a moment. If France had not been afraid of war; if Prussia had never dared to commence it; the simple menace of a camp, at Givet, would have determined Frederic William to negotiate. But the weakness which, shortly after, occasioned the fall of the monarchical power in France, already rendered all the resolutions of the Cabinet of Versailles flow, and uncertain.

The Count de Vergennes, hurried away by the activity of the Duke de la Vauguyon, had, against his own will, and the will of the King, taken a part in the first disturbances in the United Provinces. Although engaged in this dispute, the King had not supported the patriots, but with regret; he was afraid, that this contest, in exciting a fresh war, would not fail to drain his finances; however, he thought, that he could not, without disgrace, abandon Holland to the influence of England; he had always hoped to terminate this dispute, by an accommodation. M. de Montmorin, who had succeeded M. de Vergennes, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, in vain

vain represented, that, in order to attain this end, another force, than that of wisdom, must be displayed; and that, to prevent war, it was necessary for France to shew herself able to carry it on with success. In vain did the Marshal de Ségur, Minister of War, at each council, renew the demand of the funds necessary for assembling a camp at Givet. The Archbishop of Toulouse, since Archbishop of Sens, the new Minister of Finance, a man of small talent, but of great ambition; who had been indebted for his reputation to his women; and who lost it, as soon as he was placed at the head of affairs; delayed, from day to day, the decision of the council on this important determination, and thought, that the threats of an armament, without any of the expense, would be sufficient to terrify Prussia. It was evident, that this childish system could not long be successful. The Duke of Brunswick, who had, by degrees, advanced towards the frontiers of the Republic, sent officers to reconnoitre the dispositions of the French. He has himself said often, since his expedition, that if there had been a few tents at Givet, he would not have continued his march; for that the King of Prussia would not, for the sake of his sister, enter into a war with France, of which the House of Austria would but too much profit.

profit. But, having learnt that the French had not a single corps under arms, he judged that the celerity of his expedition would insure its success; and that the more boldness he displayed, the less opposition he had to expect, from the weakness of his enemies.

Having formed this resolution, he advanced rapidly, at the head of twenty thousand Prussians, in three columns. The Court of France, having learnt this unexpected intelligence, at length gave orders to assemble an army, and to send a squadron to sea. That Court entered into an alliance with Russia, Austria, and Spain. Although this resolution was rather late, it might still have saved Holland, had the patriots resisted the attacks of the Prussians for some weeks\*; but every thing combined, at once, to accelerate their ruin. The first towns, attacked by the Duke, opened their gates, at the first summons; the inundations had not the effect, that had been expected: the Rhingrave of Salm, who could have defended himself for a month at Utrecht, as was asserted by M. de Bellonet, who had been sent by France; without striking a blow,

\* See, at the end of this volume, the letter of M. de St. Priest, who had just been appointed the French Ambassador in Holland, to the Marquis de la Fayette.

surrendered

surrendered that important place, and disappeared; shamefully abandoning the party he had sworn to support; leaving behind him only a regret, that they had so injudiciously placed their confidence. The Duke of Brunswick arrived, without opposition, at the Hague. Amsterdam alone, where the States of Holland had taken refuge, defended by M. de Ternant, and a hundred French gunners, opposed a vigorous resistance to the Prussians; and made them pay, by some blood, for the conquest of the Republic. That city was, at length, obliged to capitulate; and, in less than twenty days, the United Provinces lost their liberty. The Stadtholder recovered all his power; the Princess of Orange became mistress of the arbitrary exercise of her revenge; England again became sovereign of the seas; Prussia astonished Europe, by her influence; and France lost the importance, which, from her power, and her situation, she formerly held. Shortly afterwards, the Courts of Berlin, and London, formed, with the States-General, an alliance, which sanctioned their dependence. The Stadtholderian regiments were recompensed for their services, by the pillage of the most patriotic towns; the partizans of liberty were either sacrificed, during the commotions, or forced to fly their country; the

the Grand Pensionary died of grief; and for some years, in consequence of the most complete submission, the sad calm of despotism, in Holland, succeeded the disorderly agitations of insurrection.

I have only traced a hasty picture of this Revolution, which owed its birth to the ungoverned ambition of the Stadtholder, and the Princess of Orange; its progress to their faults; and its catastrophe to exaggeration; to the ardent improvidence of the Republicans; the address of Sir James Harris; the weakness of the French; and the boldness of the Duke of Brunswick.

As the country, of which it is the theatre, has become of great interest to us, from the nature of our connections, I have thought that this slight enquiry may not be sufficient, and that it may be agreeable to the reader to have farther details of the events I have related. For this reason, I have added the following memoir, drawn up by one of our oldest diplomatists, Citizen Caillard, *Chargés des Affaires* of France at the Hague, during that revolution, and since Minister of the Republic at Berlin. If I have sufficiently shewn the faults of the Anti-Stadtholderian party, the reader will learn, by the memoir, on which he is now to enter, the diffi-

VOL. I.

H

culties

culties in the constitution of the United Provinces, which interrupted their progress; and if there shall be here found, a rigorous *critique* on the conduct of William V. and the Princess of Orange, it will be recollected, that the author, before being a severe historian, had been a pacific negociator; and resentment may, perhaps, be allowed to wisdom, when violent passions, overturn all its measures, and bring down the most dreadful storms, in stead of the peace it wished to establish.

MEMOIR

H. 1701

## MEMOIR

ON THE

## REVOLUTION OF HOLLAND.

BY CITIZEN CAILLARD,

*Formerly Chargé d' Affaires at Petersburg, at the Hague, and  
French Minister at Berlin.*

NO clear idea can be formed of the Revolution of Holland, which terminated in 1787, by the short triumph of the Stadtholder; and the momentary annihilation of the patriotic party; without reverting to a more early period, in order to know, with some precision, the successive, but continual encroachments, of the Stadtholderian power on that of the Republic, of which the States-General were the organs. Encroachments, which brought on that obstinate struggle betwixt the spirit of despotism, and the spirit of liberty; and soon after the fury of a civil war, which, during some time, desolated these pacific countries.

For this purpose, it is necessary to retrace, compendiously, the fundamental principles of the old Batavian constitution, in order to distinguish what were the limits of the Stadtholde-

H 2

rate;

rate; to what degree they had been extended; and how little space remained to be filled up, in order to arrive at absolute power, the perpetual object of its ambition.

Imagine a federal union of Seven Provinces, perfectly independent of each other, in every thing which concerned their internal government, their particular affairs, and united on those points only, in which the whole were interested; such as peace and war; the finances, as they related to the federation; the assessment, and levy of contributions, for the support of the expences of the army and the navy, &c. These points were discussed in the assembly, called the States-General.

The States-General, usually assembled at the Hague, were formed by a single deputy from each of the Seven Provinces; not that they did not possess the power of sending a more numerous deputation, but because each deputation formed only one voice; and each province, without regard to its wealth, its population, or its quota of public contributions, participated in the exercise of the sovereignty only, in the invariable ratio of one to seven. The conquered countries, namely, Dutch Brabant, Dutch Flanders, and all beyond the Meuse, Breda, Maestricht, Namur, &c. all this country, con-  
founded

founded under the denomination of the *Pays de la Generalité*, or simply *Generalité*, weighed nothing in the political hierarchy; it was, therefore, never consulted, not even on that which concerned itself in particular. The discussion, and decision of its affairs belonged, exclusively, to the States-General; and formed not the least important branch of their authority.

Each province was governed by its particular States, which were composed of deputies, that a certain number of towns, of that province, had the right to send thither. What the States-General were relatively to the provinces, the States of the provinces were relatively to their towns; that is to say, they deliberated and decided on whatever concerned the universality of their province, without having the right of meddling in what did not regard the internal affairs of each town in particular.

The towns were each governed by a regency, of which themselves chose the members from among their citizens; and from those regencies were elected the deputies, sent to the States-General. But this right of sending deputies to the Provincial States did not belong, indiscriminately, to all the towns of the provinces; it was reserved to some, which, on this account,

were distinguished by the particular denomination of *voting towns*.

The origin of this difference, in the political rights of towns, was owing to their primitive inequality in wealth, and population. When this constitution succeeded the government, and domination of the Spaniards; several towns would not, or could not, send deputies to the Provincial States, for want of means to support them there. What was then a simple suspension only of the exercise of their rights, was at length considered, as a formal renunciation of them; and so consecrated by a kind of prescription, sanctioned by time: that if these very towns had afterwards wished to reclaim their rights, their pretensions would have been regarded as an innovation, and rejected, unanimously, by the Provincial States.

Thus, the non-voting towns were ranked in the class of villages, and formed with them, what was called the *flat country*. Without any representation, the *flat country* was to the Provincial States, to which it belonged, exactly in the same relation as the *Pays de la Généralité* was to the States-General.

Independently of the deputies of towns, the union of which formed the Provincial States, there entered into their composition another element,

cient, altogether foreign, and which, on this single account, was extremely embarrassing in the details of administration; this was, a deputation from the nobility of each province, who were distinguished by the name of the Equestrian Order, and who had a voice in all the deliberations. Some writers, on the law of nations, have alleged, that, at first, they had only been admitted to represent the flat country. I do not know, if this was ever their destination; but it is certain, at least, that it was become totally forgotten; and that they were considered as an integral part of the legislative power, solely from the pretended inherent privilege of nobility by birth.

We may likewise add, that each of the Provincial States had an institution peculiar to itself. As they were not assembled in a permanent manner, as soon as they broke up, they appointed, in order to represent them until their next meeting, a commission of their own body, called *Gecomiteerde-Raad*, (council committee); who never quitted the place, and who were empowered, in urgent cases, to adopt resolutions, according to the exigency of circumstances.

Thus, the scale of the legislature consisted of only three degrees; the Regencies of Towns; the Provincial States; and the States-General.

Questions were decided by the absolute majority; but frequently by a sort of relative majority; as in the States-General, for example, consisting of seven votes, four of which were the absolute majority; two deputations might decline to deliberate, and then the question was not decided by less than a majority of three to two. But every measure concerning the finances required absolute unanimity, to be constitutionally decided.

Such is briefly the picture of this legislative power, which contained, in itself, the very active principle of its own destruction. The multiplicity of springs, which were necessary to give motion to the machine; their mutual independence; the extreme difficulty of directing their action, by a uniform impulse; the great probability that they would often act in a contrary direction; in the midst of so many divergent interests, as experience has ever superabundantly proved, at all times evinced the necessity of applying to this very complicated machine, an extremely powerful agent, capable of directing, and supporting its movement.

This agent was a Stadtholder, who was chosen from the house of the Princes of Nassau. The States, jealous of their authority, granted him, at first, but a very limited power; foreseeing, doubtless,

doubtless, the abuse which might, one day, be made of it: but it was sufficient for a Stadt-holder to be established; it was his own act, in the sequel, to extend his influence, to the point of at length attaining universal domination; and the constitution itself furnished him the means, of which he well knew how to take advantage.

A very cursory reflection on this constitution, such as we have just explained it, will easily convince the reader, that all the authorities had their sources in the regencies of the towns; since their deputations formed the Provincial States, as the deputations of the latter composed the States-General. It was, therefore, very evident, that those who exercised a powerful influence in the nomination of the magistrates in the towns, must have regencies; and, of course, Provincial States in the States-General, entirely at their disposal; and thus have invaded the legislative power, after having already seized the most important branches of the executive.

Such was, in fact, the constant policy of the Stadtholders, without exception, from William I. to William V.; and if it experienced some obstacles from patriots, noble, virtuous, and worthy, as those of the best times of the Republic of Rome,

Rome; such as Barnewelt, and the De Witts; these were removed by assassination, or judicial murder; and the Stadtholders were left at liberty to pursue their system, with greater constancy and success than before.

Captain-General, and Admiral-General, that is to say, master of the army, and of the fleet, having the privilege of a seat, in quality of Stadtholder, in the States-General, and in the States of each province, and of there giving his opinion; loaded with riches and dignities, which gave him the disposal of the principal places of the army, the navy, and the civil establishment; what means of seduction, of corruption, in the hands of a Stadtholder! and how were such powers to be prevented from, at length, increasing in an order of things, where individuals, intrusted with legislative authority, were subject to a perpetual mutability; while the Stadtholderian power, being in a state of permanency, could, at its will, accelerate or suspend its progress; according to circumstances, interrupt here or there the formation of political assemblies, which afforded it no appearance of success; and waiting the time appointed by the constitution, which might bring on the stage, men more favourable to its views.

In

In this career, William V. proceeded with gigantic strides. It is well known, with what rapidity Louis XIV. had, in 1672, achieved the conquest of a part of the United Provinces. The Stadtholderate, then recently abolished, by the influence of the celebrated, and unfortunate De Witt, had been re-established, under the pressure of circumstances, in the person of William III, and that Prince had soon obliged Louis XIV, to evacuate the provinces he had invaded, and restored tranquillity to the Republic.

The new Stadtholder had, in this respect, rendered an eminent service to his country; but he would not allow time for the public gratitude to cool, nor suffer this opportunity of extending his prerogatives, to escape. Under the pretext of punishing such of the Seven Provinces as had suffered the entry of the French, almost without resistance; he succeeded, by means of intrigue and force, in stripping them of the right of election, and taking exclusively the nomination to himself. These provinces were three in number; Gueldres, Utrecht, and Over-Yssel; and accordingly this manœuvre placed in the hands of the Stadtholder the real sovereignty of three-sevenths of the Republic. This arrangement was concluded

ed in 1674, and has been since recognized under the particular appellation of the law of 1674. We shall presently see what celebrity it acquired in the history of the Revolution of 1787.

The war of the succession of Spain furnished William III. with still greater means of taking advantage of a prerogative, perhaps, still more formidable than even the law of 1674. The part Holland performed in that celebrated war is well known: her army was commanded by the Stadtholder; and, according to the spirit of the constitution, the Captain-General was not master of the important movements of the troops, until after these movements had received the approbation of the States-General. Thus, if it was necessary to send to the field troops, stationed in a particular province; to place troops in a town, which before had none; or to strengthen the force in those towns, which were not sufficiently garrisoned; he was obliged to give an account to the States-General, in order to obtain permission. War presented a multiplicity of cases, where such a system became prodigiously inconvenient and defective. This defect William III. well knew how to remove, both in its principle and consequences; and the States-General granted him power to dispose

dispose of the army, to cause it to execute all the movements he thought proper, and to distribute it in the manner he considered most expedient for the good of the State ; and that merely on his own orders, without referring previously to the States General.

This permission was granted *for a single campaign*, as can be unanswerably proved, by the resolution formed at that time by the States-General ; but William III. being once in possession of this prerogative, took good care not to relinquish it. The permission, by degrees, became a right, which was called *the right of patents*, and which remained attached to the Stadholderate, till the total extinction of that dignity, in the person of William V. In this manner the Stadtholders became furnished with a most dangerous weapon against the real Sovereign ; and with the power of disposing of the army, according to the plan which best suited their interests ; of reinforcing the garrisons in towns, on which they could least depend ; and of making themselves masters of them by that means. It is evident, that they were enabled, every where, to prescribe laws ; and that the States preserved only a shadow of the sovereignty, whilst the reality remained entirely in the hands of their first officer.

It

It is also to be remarked, that even this shadow of absolute power left to the States-General, likewise wonderfully assisted the designs of the Stadtholders, in concealing from the eyes of Europe the extent of their real authority; and furnishing them, in every possible case, with this hypocritical answer: *The States have willed it, or the States have not willed it.—A simple Stadtholder is not the master; he is only the first servant of the Republic.* Thus, to the advantage of perpetually executing their own will, they joined also that of never being responsible for events.

It must, however, be allowed, that the province of Holland, in particular, made a long and vigorous resistance against the exercise of this *right of patents*; and that, above all, the city of Amsterdam would never suffer troops within its walls, until the revolution of 1787, having broken down all obstacles, the torrent of Stadholderian despotism every where overflowed, and forced that proud city to submit, at last, to the common law, and participate in the general misfortune.

The brilliant epochs of the Dutch Republic were, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the first half of the eighteenth.

The

The necessity of continually defending the soil against the incroachments of the sea and the rivers required not only enormous expences, but also prodigious industry. This circumstance naturally led the Dutch to the study of the mathematical and natural sciences; and these species of knowledge were very widely diffused, and became, if we may use the expression, popularised among them. The daily exigences of commerce, and the spirit of economy, inspired in them ideas, all tending to carry their machines, or their processes, to every degree of simplicity of which they were susceptible; and in general to produce the greatest effects by the smallest means. This spirit of combination and application had certainly rendered the Dutch people the most industrious, and one of the most enlightened, in all Europe. The liberty of the press, in multiplying periodical publications, which were sold at a very low price, had diffused, even among the lowest classes of society, a knowledge of the true interests of the Republic: every one was informed of the operations of the supreme power, in journals written with the simplicity and modesty peculiar to the Dutch character; and this habit had formed a very powerful public spirit,

the

the energy of which was still strengthened by a purity of manners, which the seductions of the Stadholderian power had not yet been able to divest of their ancient simplicity.

The eyes of the Dutch, therefore, were not shut to the dangers which threatened public liberty; and, at the death of William III. they thought they could not avert them more surely than by appointing no successor. Accordingly the Stadtholderian dignity remained without a titular, and the Republic, in spite of all the defects in the constitution, became not the less flourishing; nor less attracted into its interior the riches of the two worlds; in a word, it did not the less attain that high degree of prosperity, which, among the nations of Europe, became an object of admiration to some, and of despair and jealousy to others.

This state of things might have long continued, if, in the midst of the political storms, which so often disturbed the peace of Europe, it had been possible for Holland always to preserve the external tranquillity, of which it had need; and that perfect neutrality, which, far from injuring its interests, and its commerce, on the contrary, favoured their development, and extension. But its geographical position, the nature of its connection with different

ferent powers; the weight which it could throw into the balance, by its troops, its ships, its wealth: all these circumstances soon called the attention of the belligerent powers, who would not permit it to remain neuter; its prosperity was attacked in its source, that is to say, in its commerce; it was therefore under the necessity of chusing a friend, and an enemy; and thus became, in spite of itself, drawn into quarrels, in which, for the most part, it had not the smallest interest.

This was what happened in the war of 1741, which saw Holland, against her true interests, unite her arms with those of England, against France: the success of this is well known. Peace was concluded in 1748; but the partisans of the Stadtholderian system had not suffered to escape this opportunity of agitating and irritating the minds of the people against the government, to which they attributed, exclusively, the reverses which the Republic had sustained in that war. "This was not the character," said they, "that the Dutch displayed in the war of 1672, and in that of the Spanish succession. But then William III. commanded the armies, and the Republic was crowned with glory. It was resolved to suppress the office of the Stadtholder, the only

VOL. I. I "insti-

“ institution that could save the Republic in  
“ circumstances of exigency, such as a state of  
“ war. What has been the consequence? And  
“ how, in fact, can it be hoped, that Magif-  
“ trates, skilled, perhaps, in the study of the  
“ laws, and much enlightened respecting the  
“ most advantageous combinations of public  
“ and private commerce, should be equally  
“ capable of directing military operations, and  
“ conducting a war, on which, however, de-  
“ pends the glory or disgrace of the Repub-  
“ lic?”

This doctrine was preached up with ardour in the Province of Zealand, where the Stadtholder had preserved a great number of partisans. It spread with unexampled success. The little town of Tervère gave the signal, by loudly demanding a Stadtholder. The whole province immediately followed this impulse; the spirit of enthusiasm and revolution extended to the Provinces of Utrecht and Holland, and with the rapidity of lightning; and a space of less than a fortnight was sufficient to complete the Revolution, and re-establish the Stadtholderate.

In a delirium so universal, it was difficult for men's minds to keep within the bounds of sound reason. The imperious voices of the populace and the nobility stifled that of the wise  
and

and moderate Republicans; and the Stadtholderate being once more established in the person of William IV., there was no longer any dispute, but for the honour of paying him the greatest marks of devotion; and catching his favour, by proposing counsels best adapted to the support of his constitutional rights and the extension of his prerogative. Thus were preserved, and confirmed, the rights indiscriminately with the abuses, without exception, even of the right of patents, or the law of 1674.

This was not all; the Stadtholderate had been suppressed at the death of William III. Care must be taken not to expose the Republic, a second time, to such a risque; and, in order to prevent it, in the most effectual manner, that dignity was declared hereditary in the House of the Princes of Nassau - Orange, attached, in the first place, to the elder branch; failing them, to the next younger branch; and lastly, to the females, in case of extinction of the male line.

It would be an insult to the reader, to point out the consequences of a change so important in the nature of the Stadtholderate, by the independence it procured him, and the fatal blow it gave to the liberty of the Batavians.

The Stadtholders of Holland then held, in some degree, a rank amongst sovereign Princes; the greatest monarchs did not disdain to form family alliances with them; and such was the idea they entertained of their power, that, when Frederic the Great gave his niece in marriage to William V., he said, on her leaving him, "Niece, you are happy; you are now to be settled in a country, where you will enjoy all the advantages attendant on royalty, without any of its inconveniences."

The great Frederic was right. Even his Court was far less brilliant than that of the Hague; where were to be found combined, all that characterises the Courts of absolute Princes; great officers, each appointed to particular functions, solely relating to the personal service of the Prince, or the Princess; courtiers, crouching at the feet of the dispenser of favours; an imposing pomp; a strict etiquette, in virtue of which stupidity in office obtained all distinctions; while merit, without rank, could not produce attraction.

It would be unsuitable, in this memoir, to dwell longer on these miserable details of external appearance; although they did not fail to produce, in the end, on the minds of the people, an effect, which insensibly undermined the

the principle of liberty, and, by degrees, accustomed them to the domination of an individual. They presented, however, one peculiarity, which ought not to be forgotten, because it furnished a remarkable incident in the history of the Revolution of 1787. The palace that had been granted by the States for the residence of the Stadtholder, and his court, formed a large square, the east side of which contained the hall for the assembly of the States of Holland, and that of the States-General. The common court had two gates; the one towards the north, and the other towards the south. The Stadtholder, of his own authority, reserved to himself the exclusive use of the northern gate; and the lawful representatives of the real Sovereign, when they came to, or left the States, were forbidden to pass, in their carriages, through this gate; which, by way of pre-eminence, was called the Stadtholderian gate.

It may well be supposed, that while the Stadtholder was thus occupied by the interests of external vanity, he neglected nothing that could extend and consolidate his real power. The law of 1674 placed three provinces in his hands; Zealand ever was entirely devoted to him; but this was only a voluntary attachment, and consequently subject to be governed by circumstances.

cumstances. The Province of Holland, which was become the creditor of the other six, enjoyed, from its wealth, and in spite of the constitution, a preponderating influence: hence it was of more importance to the Stadtholder, to make himself master of the voices of the regents in the towns. Among the means he contrived, in order to attain his end, he confined himself to that of writing letters to the towns, towards the period of the elections, in which he recommended the persons he thought most attached to his interests. The custom of these letters of recommendation became established; and, after a certain number of years, was called by the Stadtholderian party—"the *right* of recommendation."

If this pretended right had produced its full and entire effect, the Republic, already much changed in its principles, was for ever annihilated. But the majority of the towns, in the Province of Holland, jealous of their privileges and authority, courageously resisted; and without being able entirely to prevent the admission of some Stadtholderians among the members of the magistracy, they constantly took care, that these should always find themselves in a minority, which could give no cause of alarm.

It

It was thus that the spirit of opposition was formed, and maintained; in the Province of Holland, precisely by the efforts of the Stadtholderian authority to extend its prerogative. This opposition was calm; and, for a long time, did not manifest itself by any violent measure; for it is not in the methodical genius of the Dutch to act by sudden and unforeseen starts; it requires time and reflection, to ripen their ideas, to which they do not give way, but when they have received the first impulse from events. However, some magistrates of Amsterdam had ventured to hold a noble and firm language to the Stadtholder; to convince him that they had not lost the sentiment of their own dignity; to remind him of his duties; and to restore him to the true place assigned to him by the constitution. This language, perhaps, was not dictated by a very pure patriotism, unconnected with all personal considerations; but the Stadtholderian Court was no less violently offended by it, whilst the patriots of all the Provinces lavished on it universal applause.

The general respect that had, till that time, surrounded the Stadtholderian dignity, began now to relax; and this symptom of its decline was the more serious, because William V. had not, like some of his predecessors, received from nature

one of those firm and energetic minds, which are equally practised in the labours of war and the combinations of politics; which govern public opinion, and impress on it a retrograde motion, whenever it attempts to deviate from the line prescribed.

Falsehood, weakness, and obstinacy, were the three predominant qualities in the character of William V.

Haughtiness, boundless ambition, and an implacable spirit of revenge, were the qualities which characterised his wife, the Princess of Prussia.

Extreme inferiority of talent was common to both.

Such qualities were little adapted to render the one esteemed, and the other beloved; and still less to keep them within reasonable bounds, and to guide them securely in the midst of the storm, which was gathering around them, and which was not long in bursting forth.

Both expected to find, in Prussia, and in England, a support, against which the efforts of the patriotic party must perpetually miscarry; and, assisted by the councils of Duke Louis of Brunswick, they conceived themselves in a condition, when it was no longer necessary to preserve measures, but when they might violently

lently impose silence on the voice of an opposition, more formidable than they imagined.

The event did not answer their expectation. The patriots, disgusted with the haughtiness of the Princess, and tired of negotiating with a Prince, who promised with extreme facility, and without the smallest scruple broke all his engagements; were afraid of exposing the cause of the liberties of Batavia, if they remained longer entirely in a state of inaction.

It was necessary, in the first place, to remove Duke Louis of Brunswick, who was become the soul of the Stadtholderian party. That Prince had been called to the Hague, during the minority of William V., in order to superintend his education; to instruct him in political and military affairs; in a word, to direct his first steps in the career opened to him by the Stadtholderian dignity. The title of Lieutenant-General of the Republic had been conferred on the Duke, in order that he might command the army, until the time when the young Stadtholder could assume the government himself. Thus when William V. came of age, his functions and authority naturally ceased; but the habit of commanding, so easily contracted, and so difficult to relinquish, kept him at the Hague, where the weak William  
saw

saw him with pleasure, and willingly devolved on him the dry details of military business.

By the feeble light of an obscure tradition, the patriots made the important discovery of a written engagement, by which William V., now of age, obliged himself to submit to the counsel of the Prince, and never of himself to adopt, or execute, any resolution, which had not received his express sanction.

It is well known what advantage the patriots gained over the Duke of Brunswick by this document, which, however, they rather chose to keep yet a mystery; for, in the persuasion that this mystery would be seen through by all those interested in it, they conceived, and with justice, that the Stadtholderians themselves would be pleased with their reserve, and make less difficulty of dismissing the Duke, for fear that a determined refusal might produce the immediate publication of this fatal instrument. Their calculation proved perfectly just; and the Duke was dismissed, almost without remonstrance. His dismissal, it is true, was honourable; but the patriots looked only to the fact; to them the manner was perfectly indifferent.

However, they had too much judgment and knowledge of men and things, to allow this document to remain for ever useless in their possession.

possession. It had been drawn up even in the hand-writing of Bleffwick, Grand Pensionary of Holland. Bleffwick was a man of superior merit, extremely well skilled in business and in science. He was, in particular, a great geometrician; for, at that time, nothing was more common than to find magistrates concealing, under the most simple and modest appearance, the most profound knowledge in mathematics, astronomy, mechanics, the arts, and all the branches of natural history. But Bleffwick, who was in his heart attached to the Stadtholderian cause, was one of those men who, in political divisions, wish to follow one party, but without giving too much offence to others, and who never lost the opportunity of taking advantage of some resource on all sides, so that he might not have the chance of too many events against him.

Such was Bleffwick. A Grand Pensionary of Holland was a most important personage to the Provincial, as well as to the United States; and the weight which he threw into the scale made the acquisition of this man highly valuable to the patriotic party. And accordingly, the patriots, who, by means of this document, could inevitably ruin Bleffwick, thought it preferable to keep it back, in order that they might thenceforth have him entirely in their power. They  
had

had a conference with him, and the substance of their address may be reduced nearly to this:—

“ We have your life in our hands: you see this instrument drawn up in your own handwriting; if we publish it, and you are on this brought to trial, you must inevitably lose your head. If we keep matters to ourselves, you are safe: take your choice.” There was, indeed, little room for deliberation; and Bleffwick purchased the silence of the patriots at the price which they chose to put on it. This price was, that he should entirely attach himself to the Republican party, and promise to assist them on all occasions, as well as to consult in every thing the heads of the party, and follow the impulse he received from them. His promise was the more sincere, because he saw the fatal instrument as a sword continually suspended over his head, and which threatened his life, the moment he receded from his engagements.

The conduct of the patriots on this occasion cannot certainly be well justified, on the strict principles of universal morality; but it was their business to insure the success of the cause of liberty, and consequently that of pure and disinterested minds, who, being attached exclusively to the general welfare, felt that the prosperity

prosperity of the Republic was irreconcilable with the tyranny of a Stadtholder. This Stadtholder and his adherents employed, indiscriminately, all the means that occurred to them; and every thing appeared justifiable to them which could promote their designs. The crisis began to be violent; the personal safety of the patriotic chiefs was eminently exposed, had not the struggle terminated in their favour; and, in these circumstances, ought they to have neglected an opportunity that so naturally occurred, of making themselves absolute masters of the opinion and the conduct of an important functionary, and gaining the double advantage of withdrawing him from the Stadtholderian party, and thereby strengthening that of the patriots. Accordingly they did so, without scruple; and, when Bleffwick was at the end of his *quinquennium*, the term fixed for the exercise of the office of Grand Pensionary, they had the credit of continuing him in this employment for the five ensuing years.

The animosity of the parties against each other was now become extreme. The political conduct of the Stadtholder hitherto had carried the indignation of the friends of liberty to its height; and it must be acknowledged, that they had every reason on their side. To be convinced  
of

of this, it is only necessary to take a hasty view of some of the events of that period.

England was engaged in a contest with her North-American colonies, and had just declared war against France. She wished to draw Holland into this quarrel, and demanded of her the succours stipulated by treaties. The Dutch alleged, that the treaties did not apply to this case, as their alliance was purely defensive, and in no respect offensive. They, at the same time, published a resolution of observing a perfect neutrality. The English, according to their custom, answered, by seizing all the Dutch ships that could be fallen in with by their squadrons or privateers, and particularly those that were loaded with naval stores for France. In vain did the States wish to rely on a treaty of commerce, concluded between the two powers, about the year 1674; by which it was agreed, that in case either of them should have to sustain a maritime war, the other might freely carry to the hostile power all sorts of naval stores; such as wood for ship-building, masts, cordage, hemp, &c.; all these articles being specified, by name, in the treaty, which only excepted warlike stores; such as gunpowder, saltpetre, guns, muskets, and arms of every sort. England, who had profited by the treaty when

when the Dutch were at war with France, would not permit them to take advantage of it in their turn, when she herself was engaged in war against the French. In vain did the Dutch claim the reciprocity, which is the basis of all treaties; in vain did they exclaim against this breach of faith. After some discussions, which did not stop the course of depredations, the Cabinet of St. James's drily told the Dutch, that the treaty of 1674 was to be considered as unfuitable.

It is certain, that the Court of London reckoned on the connivance of the Stadtholder; and the sequel proved, that it was not deceived in its hopes. The great commercial cities united in soliciting respectable convoys, which might secure the freedom of their navigation. The States received graciously these demands, and ordered the Stadtholder, as Admiral-General, to adopt all measures necessary for insuring due respect at sea to the Dutch flag. William V. should, at least, have appeared to obey; but he displayed so much disinclination, and indifference, in the preparations; the ships which he armed were in so bad a condition, and required so long repairs, that the Dutch commerce had all the time to suffer enormous losses; and when, at length, every thing was ready,  
and

and the convoys departed from the ports, the English met them, at an appointed spot, and seized all the ships, both convoy and merchantmen. The success of other expeditions was the same; and the public opinion accused the Stadtholder of a criminal intelligence with the Court of London; and of giving the commanders of ships, who were always chosen from among his most zealous partisans, secret instructions, calculated to occasion the miscarriage of all these expeditions.

It is not easy to conceive the degree of exasperation to which the people's minds were raised against William V., in the great cities, and particularly in Amsterdam. A terrible explosion might have taken place at this very time; it was suspended by an important event, which restored to the Dutch some hope in respect of the future fate of their commerce.

Catherine II. had just concluded a treaty of armed neutrality with Sweden and Denmark. This treaty, drawn up exactly after our law of 1778, relative to the navigation of neutrals, contained, among other articles, the carriage of which were to be entirely free, the explicit enumeration of precisely all those expressed in the treaty of 1674.

Nothing

Nothing could better suit the Dutch, in their present circumstances, than to unite their cause to that of the northern maritime nations, by acceding to this treaty of armed neutrality. The proposition was made to the States, and speedily adopted. For this negotiation, two ambassadors extraordinary were sent to Petersburg; but William V. had succeeded in making the choice fall on two persons whom he knew to be devoted to his person and interests. These were, M. de Waffenaar-Staremburg and M. d' Heckeren Brantzenburg. They arrived in 1780. M. de Waffenaar, who appeared to be the head of the embassy, and to be intrusted with the secret of the negotiation, threw into it a tardiness, which appeared affected, and seemed even to shackle the business he came to conclude, by unexpectedly advancing demands which no one thought could be admitted, or even deserved a moment's attention. Besides, as it would have been absurd to suppose that Catharine could condescend to make a particular treaty for Holland, the question was only, if that power would, or would not, accede to the treaty, as it had been signed by Sweden and Denmark? and this question became so simple, that the ambassadors could not, without disgracing themselves, temporize any longer. They,

VOL. I.

K

therefore,

therefore, signed the treaty; and the ratifications were exchanged as soon as the distance would permit.

Never did Holland believe herself so firmly sure of a neutrality, which should put her commerce out of the reach of all interruption. The English reasoned differently. The navigation of the Baltic was too necessary to them, to dare to brave the coalition of the northern powers, who were on the point of avenging the insults that had been given to the commerce of the nations comprised in the treaty. On the other hand, they were determined not to allow Holland to profit by the circumstances of the unfortunate war in which they were engaged; or to relinquish peaceably, and without concurrence, a navigation, that was to add to the extent, and multiply the sources, of their prosperity. They laboured to reconcile two points of view so very different; and since they could not prevent the Republic from entering into this coalition, they saw no other measure to be pursued than that of tearing her from it by violence. This they did, by declaring war against her so abruptly, that the news reached Peterburgh, almost at the moment when the negotiation was concluded.

This

This unexpected declaration essentially changed the external connections of the Republic, by uniting its interests with France and America; and prodigiously augmented the force and influence of the patriotic party, to the detriment of the Stadtholderian authority. The English had perceived this inconvenience, but did not allow it to deter them. They knew the deplorable state into which William V. had suffered the navy of Holland to fall. Time was necessary to restore it: hitherto the weight which it threw into the balance against them was absolutely nugatory, and when its restoration should place the Republic in a condition to undertake any enterprise, they were well assured that the Stadtholder, Admiral-General, would adopt a system of measures calculated to render the operations of the fleet but little to be dreaded.

These personal dispositions of the Stadtholder require that we should here pause a moment, in order to give a true explanation of them; and to prevent the suspicion which might arise of a marked partiality, on our part, against that Prince. We do not seek to throw an odium on his intentions, we have no interest in doing it; we wish only to present truth to the reader on a historical point little known in France, now

almost forgotten, and which is only connected by a slender thread with the present situation of affairs in Europe. William V. has lost his dignity; the patriotic party of that time is at this day dispersed; their principles are forgotten, and succeeded by others very different: what reason, then, can we have to dissemble, or disguise the truth?

To attain supreme power has been the aim of all the Stadtholders since William I. The evidence of history is uniform and irrefragable on that point. It was equally the object of William V. and the evil counsellors who surrounded him. France, and the patriotic party, endeavoured to restrain this propensity to general domination: England, on the contrary, promoted it with all her power. France, wished to establish Republican principles in Holland; and eagerly desired that her navy should recover its ancient splendour; attaching but a secondary importance to the land forces, in a country which, on an emergency, might be sufficiently defended by French battalions. England endeavoured to eradicate all Republican principles, and to substitute those of an individual authority; she was also anxious that the Admiral-General should give but slight attention to the navy, under the pretext that, in any emergency, the  
the

the navy of Great Britain could effectually defend Holland; but she was particularly desirous that he might bestow every attention on the land forces; the first source of all his power, both internal and external, from the great number of places it put at his disposal; which increased indefinitely the number of his servants; and by the use to which he might apply it, either against an external enemy, or to keep the States themselves in awe, thus more easily to attain all that is real in sovereignty.

In this manner France and the patriotic party strenuously opposed what England as strenuously supported. Ought we, then, to be astonished at the irresistible propensity, by which William V. blindly abandoned himself to all the impulses, he received from the Minister of Great Britain?

Unfortunately, his personal interest was in direct opposition to the general interests of the Republic. Commercial jealousy was, in this whole affair, the sole regulator of the conduct of England. She wished to deprive the Dutch of every support, and, above all, that of France; and to rule in Holland, exclusively, by a Stadtholder become absolute, with a view of letting their navy fall into complete decay; in order to, more easily, destroy their commerce, or, at least,

to get possession of the most important branches of it.

France, on the contrary, had very different views on Holland. A rival far less dangerous than England for maritime and distant commerce, it was her interest that the Dutch should prosper; that their trade, instead of suffering any diminution, should rather acquire all the extent of which it was susceptible, and procure them wealth, which might enable them to carry their naval force to the highest degree of splendour; for this was the only means to rescue them from the yoke of England, and one day to oppose them with success against the boundless ambition of that power.

It was impossible that these views should escape the observation of a reflecting and enlightened nation, like the Dutch; and as it was obvious, that the Stadtholder would entirely give himself up to the counsels and influence of the English; it was as natural that a party should be formed entirely adverse, and openly declared in favour of France.

William V. was not slow in manifesting his true intentions. After the declaration of war by England, it was necessary to think of defensive measures, and speedily to equip the ships belonging to the Republic. The  
navy

any was found to be in the most ruinous situation. Fortunately, a man of genius was placed at the head of the Admiralty of the Meuse. This was the celebrated Paulus, who, being only an advocate, and having scarcely reached his thirtieth year, had been called to the office of fiscal of that department. He displayed in his ministry superior talents and astonishing activity; the repairs and constructions were pushed on with vigour; his example excited the emulation of the Admiralty of Amsterdam; inasmuch, that, in a very short time, the Republic had at its disposal a fleet of about forty ships of the line, either entirely new or substantially repaired.

Holland concerted with France respecting the most advantageous disposition of this force; and it was agreed, that the most considerable part of it should assemble at the Texel, whence it should proceed to join the French fleet at Brest. Had this plan been put in execution, England would have been ruined. It is generally known that William V. caused it to miscarry; and his office of Admiral-General furnished him a thousand means, none of which were neglected. The ships were entrusted to commanders chosen from among the most inveterate enemies of France; some of whom were even

not afraid to declare loudly, that they would rather die than fight for the French. The supplies were provided with a studied tardiness; it was with difficulty that orders were wrested from the Admiral-General, who took care always to leave something wanting; and at the moment when the fleet appeared in a situation to put to sea, there arrived, unexpectedly, a new cause of delay on the part of some commanders, who represented that their ships were still deficient in certain articles, without which it was impossible to sail. All these representations were graciously received, and submitted to an examination, which the Stadtholder was never pressed to terminate. During these manœuvres, the time slipped away, and the favourable season was lost, before a single sloop could be sent out of the Texel; till, at length, the approach of bad weather, determined the Stadtholder to declare, that the fleet should not go to sea.

Among a nation less phlegmatic, a conduct so criminal would have sent the Admiral-General immediately to the scaffold. The Dutch dissembled, and cautiously confined themselves to an examination of all the documents, in order to make use of them at a proper opportunity.

William

William V. suffered no opportunity to escape of shewing his ill will. A great number of vessels, destined for the Baltic trade, were collected together, and had required to be protected by a force so much the more considerable, as it was known that ten English sail of the line, under the command of Admiral Parker, were then in the Sound. William caused some ships to be armed, and entrusted the command of them to Admiral Zoutman. He was an officer loaded with years, who was scarcely known, because he had not for a length of time been in service; and it was well understood that this choice was not made without design. He represented that the force entrusted to him was not adequate: he was pacified, by being told, that he would fall in with Admiral Kingsberg, who, with several ships, was cruising in his track. He set sail with his convoy. In fact, he did meet Admiral Kingsberg, and entreated him to form a junction. Kingsberg shewed him his instructions, which did not allow him more than twenty-four hours at his own disposal, and enjoined him to make sail for Holland at the expiration of that time. Thus was the unfortunate Zoutman deceived and sacrificed; for he was not in a condition to resist alone, and to save

save his convoy. But Kingsberg, the greatest seaman in Holland, and perhaps in Europe, though very much attached to the Stadtholder, was still more so to honour. He formed a junction then with Zoutman, and promised to accompany him still some days beyond the time prescribed by his instructions.

Parker, who, on his side, was perfectly well informed, hastened to quit the Sound, and proceeded to meet the Dutch convoy; not even imagining that he should experience the smallest difficulty in taking possession of it. The engagement took place on the Dogger-Bank, towards the side of Jutland, and the English were very much astonished to find a force so little disproportionate to their own. The difference was but a ship or two; and one large Dutch frigate, of forty guns had the hardihood to fall into the line. The engagement commenced; Zoutman maintained it like a hero; Kingsberg seconded him with intrepidity; and Parker, after useless efforts to break their line, seeing himself very roughly handled, judged it proper to make a retreat before his ships should be completely disabled, and fall into the enemy's power.

The news of this action was received at Amsterdam with transports of joy by all the patriots

trials, and even by those of the opposite party, who had not yet entirely lost every sentiment of the national dignity. It was very different at the Stadtholderian Court, where it was received with a melancholy silence, which but too much indicated hopes deceived. It was even asserted at the time, that in the first moments, William V. was so little master of his vexation, as himself to betray the secret of his thoughts, by letting these words escape: "I hope at least that the English have lost nothing." This phrase bears a character so improbable, that we will not venture to answer for the truth of it. It is, nevertheless, very certain, that the consternation was general at Court, where nobody dared to speak of an event so honourable to the Dutch Navy; and when the conqueror of the Dogger-Bank returned from his expedition, he was received without any mark of distinction, with the coldness which accompanies the most perfect indifference\*; and the brave Zoutman, without departing from his simplicity and his modesty, returned to his original obscurity, from which the Admiral-General was never again inclined to recall him.

\* *Exceptus brevi osculo nulloque sermone; turba servientium se immiscuit.*

TACIT. in Agric.

It may be said, that the engagement of the Dogger-Bank was a victory which the patriots had obtained over the Stadtholder; and their party received from it a great increase of strength and extension. They took advantage of the moment, to strike a decisive blow at the Stadtholderian authority; to make themselves masters of the deliberations of the most important affairs, and to ensure to their party an incontestible superiority over their opponents.

The war with England was terminated by the peace of 1783. It had cost the Dutch their settlement of Negapatnam, on the coast of Coromandel. The sacrifice was not very important; but its value was exaggerated by the Stadtholderians, who thence took occasion to indulge in declamations against France; whilst, it was evident, that the evil had its source in the criminal manœuvres, by which, the Stadtholder prevented the junction of the Dutch fleet with that of Brest; a plan which might have infallibly led to a very different Peace. This was the moment to establish an entire new policy in Holland, and to found an alliance with France. It was desired at Versailles, because it promised many advantages when the Republican party should have gained superior influence. It was ardently wished by the patriots,

patriots, because it procured them a formidable support from without; in furnishing them, from within, with powerful means to render nugatory all the ill will of their Stadtholder. William V. alone, secretly felt an invincible repugnance against this measure; but he could not oppose it openly, without putting into the hands of the patriots, arms too dangerous against himself. The negotiation, then, was carried on, with all the activity which the embarrassment of forms, prescribed by the Dutch constitution, would allow; and the treaty, signed at Versailles the 8th of November, 1785, was ratified by the States-General the 12th of December following.

This event, which might soon be rendered totally useless by the carelessness and timidity of the French Court; was celebrated by the patriots in all the provinces; and even commemorated by medals struck at Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Zuric-Zee, a small town in Zealand, highly distinguished by the spirit of liberty with which it was animated.

This was, beyond dispute, one of the most important political acts of the Count de Vergennes, then Minister for Foreign Affairs; who, after wresting North-America from the dominion of the English, and afterwards depriving them of the Dutch alliance; considerably diminished their  
relative

relative force, by augmenting that of France in the same proportion.

The negotiation had been very intricate; for, pending the treaty of alliance, a treaty of peace was also negotiating between Holland and the Court of Vienna; and France had accepted the office of mediator between the two powers. It is known that Joseph II. had unexpectedly formed pretensions on the town of Maastricht, which did not bear even the shadow of justice; then changing the object, he had relinquished his claim as to Maastricht, and insisted on the free navigation of the Scheldt; and at length encountering insurmountable difficulties, not only on the part of Holland, but even on the part of France also, he was reduced to a demand of money.

It was evident that the Dutch owed him nothing; but the love of peace, and the suggestions of France, determined them not to turn a deaf ear to the Imperial propositions. The mediation was submitted to the Cabinet of Versailles. This was a bargain, rather than a negotiation, since the peace was considered by the contractors as a merchandise which the Emperor wished to sell for ten millions, whilst only five were offered by the Dutch. This was in fact the reciprocal price. The Emperor's demands,

demands, exorbitant at first, had been lowered to nine millions five hundred thousand florins; but the Dutch obstinately adhered to their first offer of five millions\*. The mediator nobly put an end to the difficulty, and closed this shameful struggle of avarice against the spirit of equity and oeconomy, by pledging himself to pay to the Emperor the four millions and a half which remained in dispute; so that the treaty of peace between Holland and Vienna was signed on the same day as that of the alliance with the United Provinces.

The two treaties, arriving in Holland at the same time, might, and in fact did, produce a sensation entirely to the advantage of the patriots; and it was time that an event so important should yield them strength, to enable them to maintain the cause of liberty against every kind of attack which it had to endure from the Stadtholderian party.

\* It was in this manner that Frederic the Great foresaw that this quarrel would be terminated. As he was one day diverting himself with the Dutch Minister, at his Court, on the pretensions of Joseph relative to Maastricht and the Scheldt, he jocularly said of them: "I see already how this affair will be finished. You will give the Emperor *something to drink*, and there will be no longer a question about nothing." It is said that Joseph II. was not ignorant of this *bon mor.*

These influenced, and that principally at the Hague, the lowest classes of the people, by which they excited popular commotions at pleasure. This abominable expedient was, and always had been, in the hands of the Stadtholders, a very dangerous weapon, which, without appearing to take a part in it, they employed to destroy those of their adversaries, from whom they thought it was not otherwise in their power to rid themselves. And to cite one example; the Stadholderian fanaticism had excited the commotion, which terminated by the horrible massacre of the virtuous and unfortunate Dewitts. It is shrewdly suspected, that this resource was not neglected in the crisis at which the authority of William V. had arrived.

We are very far indeed from wishing to give credit to the tedious recitals of each of these commotions; but we cannot pass over in silence that of the 8th of September, 1785, because it was important in its object; and in its consequences gave birth to the celebrated question of the command of the Hague; and introduced the first interference of the Court of Berlin in the internal government of the Republic.

Vān-

Van-Berkel, Giflaer, and Zeeberg, were the principal leaders of the patriotic party. The first was pensioner of the city of Amsterdam; the second, of Dort; and the third, of Harlem; They had on that day set out for the country, with some friends, who played a very important part in the scene. It was on a Sunday, a day on which the Dutch in general very religiously abstain from all business, and suspend the Assembly of the States of the Province, as well as that of the States-General. They were to return in the evening in a yacht, and the place of their debarkation was known. In the morning the ferment began to shew itself amongst the populace. In the course of the day it increased, and towards the close of it became extremely threatening. A thousand indications clearly marked its origin; and the scene of action, which was principally confined to the spot where the yacht was to land, left no doubt as to the true object of the commotion. The Stadtholder had retired to a country-house, called "*The House in the Wood*," situated at a fort a quarter of a league from the Hague. The tumult had arrived at that point, which could no longer be repressed but by the assistance of an armed force, and the urgency of the occasion would not allow of an address to the

Captain-General, for the purpose of obtaining an order from him to put the garrison of the Hague in motion ; besides, in persuasion that William V. was the first mover of the tumult, there was no doubt made that orders were given to the garrison, in such a manner that the seditious multitude would have had all the time that was necessary for the execution of their design.

In a crisis so pressing, the *Gecomiteerde-Raad*, or *Council-Committee*, whose functions we have pointed out above, took, in its quality of representative-legate of the Sovereign, the resolution of giving instant orders to the garrison, without requiring the intervention of the Captain-General. The military force was instantly marched to the place indicated ; it executed with promptitude and loyalty the orders it received ; stopped the progress of the commotion ; took possession of the spot where the patriots were to land ; protected them on their arrival ; and facilitated the means of their return to their habitations, without suffering the smallest accident. During the night numerous patrols were established ; the seditious, whose measures were entirely frustrated by this vigilance, retired also ; and all was then quiet.

But

But William V. was not so. The next day the States of Holland, struck by what had passed the preceding evening, had deliberated, in their assembly, on the means of preventing similar events in future. And as tranquillity depended on the precision of the orders given to the troops to maintain it; too uncertain of the good will of the Stadtholder, they had entrusted this care to the *Council-Committee*; and, what is very remarkable, to the unanimity of the eighteen voting cities, amongst which, were, besides, several very much attached to the Stadtholderian cause; so universal was the persuasion that William was no stranger to these seditious movements. At that moment the Prince appeared in the assembly, complained of the resolution which had just passed, entreated that the disposition of the troops might be left to him, at least at that time, with a promise to give the most express orders to prevent every kind of tumult. He withdrew, whilst they deliberated on his request; but the States persisted in their resolution with the same unanimity, and the order of the Noblesse was the only one which refused its assent, accompanying its refusal with a protest.

William conceived the most lively resentment at the rejection of his request, and the

measures to which he resorted were the primary source of all the evils which ensued, and of the civil war which soon after broke out. Nevertheless, in precisely fixing the state of the question, it is reduced, in the last analization, to ascertain—"Whether the Sovereign, in the place even of its residence, had a right to issue its immediate orders to the garrison without the intervention of its Captain-General? or whether it was from the Captain-General *alone* that the garrison *could* receive orders?" It is difficult to conceive that such a question could be started, since the supreme command could never exclusively belong to the Captain-General, without placing the Sovereign in an absolute dependance on its first functionary, which is repugnant to the nature of things. This command of the States-General, also, had only been granted to the Stadtholder, in order to be exercised by him, *during their pleasure*; a clause by which they reserved the supremacy to themselves, in order to resume the exercise of it as soon as circumstances should appear to them to require it.

William V. considered things under a very different point of view. Humbled by the decision of the States of Holland, he began by quitting his uniform, as if that resolution had

stripped him of his commission of Captain-General; set off afterwards for Breda; from whence he went to shut himself up in his castle of Loo, in Gueldres, fifteen leagues from the Hague. Thence he transmitted an account to the Court of Berlin of all that had just passed, in hopes that the King of Prussia would make a family affair of it, and that he would address a memorial to the States of Holland, in which he would insist that they should restore to him the command of the Hague, as a *right inherent in his dignity*, threatening not to return to that residence if he experienced a refusal.

Again it must be remarked, that the resolution of the States of Holland took not from the Prince the principal direction of the garrison of the Hague in every thing that might concern discipline and economy; it was a measure of the moment, and when circumstances should become more calm, every thing would infallibly return into the usual course. William therefore, at that time, pursued only a succession of false and inconsiderate steps; and by wishing to force his sovereign to a shameful capitulation, it is evident that he voluntarily closed the avenue to all reconciliation. But, perhaps he was also desirous to carry things to

L 3

extremities,

extremities, solely to compel Prussia to interfere, and by this means to take advantage, in order entirely to crush the opposite party.

It was a long time before these hopes were realized. The great Frederic was still alive, and concerned himself but little about his niece ; and being accustomed to judge of men only by their intrinsic worth, he held the Stadtholder in no sort of esteem ; and, above all, he was far from being willing to derange the least of his political combinations for an object so unimportant as the command of the Hague. The efforts of William would then have totally fallen at Berlin, if *Herbert* had not, at that time, been Minister there. Devoted to the Princess Stadtholder, and devoured by the paltry vanity of having himself spoken of, he represented the affair in such a manner to Frederic, as to engage this Prince to consent to enter into it, but to use only means of persuasion. Patriots or Stadtholderians were all quite equal in his eyes. His interference was therefore limited to some official steps, and certain memorials presented to France and to the States of Holland, by his Ministers at the Hague and at Paris. From Versailles it was answered, That the command of the Hague was a question which belonged to the internal government of the Province of Holland ; and  
with

with which the French Ministry did not think they ought to interfere, to avoid giving a stab to the liberty of an allied power. Holland replied, with a noble simplicity, by limiting herself to establish the facts, and the true state of the question, and did not take the trouble to demonstrate how very insupportable the pretensions of the Prince were; and the affair from that time assumed the character rather of an intrigue than a negotiation.

In the mean time the memorial by which the Prince claimed the command of the garrison of the Hague, as a right inherent in his dignity; required a formal resolution of the States of Holland. Van-Berkel, the Pensioner of Amsterdam, had digested and presented a report, which opposed the Stadholderian pretensions; and this report, taken *ad referendum*, was circulated in the cities, where it formed the subject of the deliberations of the Regencies. Out of the eighteen voting towns, the Patriots had usually fourteen on their side; amongst which was Amsterdam, considered as the most faithful to the cause of liberty. Intrigue, on this occasion, succeeded in misleading the Council of that city, and Van-Berkel's report was rejected. The defection of Amsterdam drew along with it that of some small towns, to

which it at all times gave the impetus, and shook some others. This change of mind rendered the solution of the question more problematical, and the Patriots were obliged to labour anew, in order to secure the majority. There remained but five towns on which they could depend. Six were still on the balance, seven were in the opposition.

In this critical situation the Patriots had need of all their constancy, in order to regain the ground they had lost, and to throw Amsterdam into the minority. They succeeded; and as soon as they were certain of the plurality of suffrages, the question of the command of the Hague was brought before the States of Holland, where it was decided against the Stadtholder by a majority of ten voices against nine: which resolution was passed the 27th of July, 1786. This was a very small majority for a resolution to which both parties attached so great an importance: but if it be taken into consideration, that, of nineteen voices, of which the States of Holland are composed, ten of them decidedly took away the command from the Prince; three only preserved it to him entire, and the other six only granted it to him, but with restrictions, to which he had given an absolute refusal,

refusal, it will be seen that William was really in a minority, consisting of three against sixteen.

Thus terminated an affair much more celebrated than important, and which the Stadtholder might have stopt in its origin, if he had known how to give way to the circumstances of the moment : but whether from the effect of his natural obstinacy, or whether solely from the bad advice of those who surrounded him, he was determined to have all or nothing; and by thus pushing things to the extreme, he reduced the States of Holland to the necessity of adopting resolutions of quite a different nature, and which attacked his prerogative, on the points to which he was most ardently attached.

Whilst this affair was going on, and both parties displayed all their powers, the one to ensure its success, and the other to make it miscarry; the patriots were employed on some other objects, which, to superficial minds, might appear trifling, but which must be allowed important, in the eyes of those who know the effect of external appearances on the mind of the multitude, whose ideas it is at all times highly important to correct, but more particularly so in the time of a revolution.

Military

Military honours were exclusively paid to the Stadtholder, even by the Holland regiment of guards, solely appropriated to guard the States of Holland. Its colours bore, indeed, the arms of the Province, but they were quartered with those of the Prince in such a manner, that the Stadtholderian escutcheon was displayed in full, and struck all eyes, whilst those of the Province were scarcely distinguishable. It was the same with the gorget of the officers. At length, that Stadtholderian-gate, of which we have above made mention, that gate, a daily insult to the dignity of the Sovereign, was still interdicted to the deputies, as well of the Province as of the States-General. The day of 27th February terminated this abuse. Military honours were paid to the States at the entrance of the deputies to the assembly, as well as at their departure. The regiment of guards received new colours, which no longer bore the arms of the Prince, but only the Belgic Lion. At last the Stadtholderian-gate was opened, not only to the deputies, but to all citizens, without distinction.

But let it not be imagined, that it was here a question only to wound the Prince's self-love, or to gratify a motion of vanity, by assuming some marks of distinction, which custom had  
not

not till then authoris'd. Republican simplicity was above these paltry considerations, and the patriots were guided by views more sane and profound. They knew that the populace, whom it was so important to manage; the instrument of so many revolutions in Holland, had been almost irresistibly led to confound the external pomp of the sovereignty with the sovereignty itself; and that this was the source of its blind attachment to the House of Orange; that when it saw on one side the members of the States enter into, and depart from, the assembly in their modest *costume*, without exciting the least attention, the Stadtholder, surrounded by a pomp truly royal, fixing all looks, receiving external honours at every step, it could not but imagine that *there* was the power, where it saw the magnificence; in a word, that, having the sovereign and the subject under view, it applied these two denominations, precisely in the sense conformable to appearances, and contrary to reality.

In respect to the regiments it was nearly the same: the officers, seeing on their colours and their gorgets the shield of the Prince, near to which that of the Province was scarcely perceptible, insensibly became accustomed to look on themselves as belonging to the Stadtholder rather than

than to the States; and the more willingly adopted this sentiment, which further flattered their vanity. Thence a general disposition to obey the Prince with more eagerness than the States; a pernicious disposition, which in circumstances of difficulty might become fatal to the internal repose of the Republic.

It became then very important to enlighten the soldier and the populace; to inform them in whom the sovereign power resided, in such manner, that they might be no more mistaken; and, since this multitude formed their judgment on external honours only; on this report of the two resolutions of the States of Holland, rested a very wise and well-grounded policy.

They were not carried into execution till the 17th of March following; and the scene which passed on that very day, in proving the importance which the people attached to these changes, equally shewed how extremely urgent it was to rectify their ideas. The disgraceful Stadtholderian-gate had remained open from the 15th. To the local detail we have already given, it is necessary for understanding that which follows, to add, that this gate forms an arch-way of from twenty to thirty feet. This is joined by a bridge thrown over a wide and deep canal, which furrounds the palace, and ornamented with

with a small parapet, breast high. This bridge is joined to a kind of square, or large outer-court, which that day, as well as the inner-court, was found to be filled by an immense multitude of the populace, attracted and hurried thither by the desire of seeing the ceremony of military honours paid to the Sovereign States in the person of their members. Till that time, none of them had thought proper to make use of the prerogative of passing through the Stadtholderian-gate, and under various pretexts they continued to go out by the opposite side. It is probable, that none of them dared to lead the way, and expose themselves to risks, in the midst of a populace whose bad intentions were well known to them.

Gislaer, young, and certainly very courageous, felt how fatal this timidity might prove, from the ridicule which it would naturally cast upon the States in general, and upon each of its members in particular, and he devoted himself to the support of his cause. Accompanied by Gaeverds, burgomaster of Dort, he advanced towards the Stadtholderian-gate. It was crowded by the populace. The coachman was frightened, and dared not proceed. Gislaer put his head out of the window, and commanded him to drive on in defiance of all obstacles: his coach  
became

became entangled under the arch-way. At this moment some villains rushed forward, and stopped its progress, whilst others seized the reigns of the horses. It is clear that the catastrophe would not have been long delayed, had it not been prevented by the horse guards, who came up at full speed, easily dispersed the multitude, and seized on him that appeared the most furious. Gislæer passed safe and triumphant, and all his colleagues have since passed the same way.

To conclude, the plot was not executed as it had been conceived. The villains ought to have waited till the coach, having passed the gate, had arrived on the bridge, which is not very wide. Then, whilst some cut the traces of the horses with knives, which had been made expressly for the purpose, others were to throw themselves on the coach, and to overturn it into the canal. Their precipitation caused the failure of the plan, and Gislæer was not drowned; but he would infallibly have been assassinated, had he not been quickly succoured. The arrested criminal was found to be a hair-dresser, a domestic to a chamberlain of the Prince, named Bigot, an avowed personal enemy of Gislæer; and one circumstance, which should not be overlooked, is, that this hair-dresser

dresser had arrived from Loo precisely two days before the transaction. It may easily be conceived to what conjectures this concurrence gave place; it is at least singular, if it was adventitious.

The prosecution of the criminal was referred to the council committee, in order to be tried in the Provost's court: the sentence soon followed—it was the punishment of death. When it was presented to the States of Holland, Gislæer and Gaeverds, as being parties to the prosecution, at first declined to vote; then divesting themselves of their character of representatives, in order to appear only as injured individuals, they requested and obtained a commutation of the punishment in favour of the culprit. Nevertheless, the preparations for the execution were made the next day with much solemnity. The criminal was led through a double row, formed by the garrison, from his prison to the scaffold, where his sentence was read to him. It expressed that he had been unanimously condemned to death by his judges; but that, by the particular solicitation even of those he had intended to murder, the States of Holland had granted him his life, and limited his punishment to perpetual imprisonment. He

was

was afterwards taken back to his prison with the same solemnity.

In times of trouble and division, every unsuccessful enterprise of either party infallibly gives additional strength to its opponent. This happened on the present occasion. The danger just escaped by Giflaer, the most active, as well as the most ardent, among the chiefs of the patriotic party, attached to his name and person a marked interest; and even a sort of veneration, under the influence of which, measures were, without contradiction, adopted, that had no other aim but to strengthen the party, and more and more to repress the Stadtholderian spirit. It is thus that the free corps formed by voluntary associations of patriotic citizens, who were trained on fixed days to the use of arms, and other military exercises; but who, till that time, had not a legal existence, were authorised and established, and, by an express resolution, placed under the inspection and immediate protection of the States of Holland; whilst those which the Stadtholderian populace had formed, in imitation of the citizens, were, by the same resolution, dissolved, and proscribed with disgrace. These measures contributed very much to ensure the public tranquillity, and the corps thus sanctioned

sanctioned by law, in the sequel rendered very important services to the Republican party in the interior of the Province of Holland.

Whilst these things were passing at the Hague, the Stadtholderian authority was attacked in one of its usurpations, which the spirit of liberty bore with the greatest impatience. This was the law of 1674, which lay heavy, as we have already said, on the Provinces of Gueldres, of Utrecht, and Over-Yssel. This affair was foreign to the Province of Holland; but though it was not allowed by the constitution directly to interpose its interference, the abolition of this law was a part too essential to the Republican system, for the Dutch Patriots to neglect seeking to promote it by every means which the constitution had left at their disposal.

The first impulse was given at Utrecht, in the month of December, 1785. For a length of time, the citizens of that place employed all their efforts in order to obtain the suppression of the law of 1674; to substitute a new one in its place, all the points of which had been agreed on, and which had even been delivered to the press, in order to be submitted to the tribunal of public opinion. A magistracy almost entirely aristocratic could not but conse-

crate it by their approbation, and this had been expected. The body of citizens, firm in their design, were assembled to the number of five thousand in the great square, before the Town-house, in order to demand the acceptance of the new law. The whole multitude were without arms, and waited for the answer of the magistrates with a calmness and composure of which there is not, perhaps, any other but the Dutch Nation that can furnish an example. The magistrates, convinced, by their own eyes, that the wish which had been presented to them was truly the general desire, after a long deliberation accepted it, under a condition, that this new law should be sanctioned by the States of the Province, which were to be assembled three months afterwards. The five thousand petitioners, after having remained assembled during thirteen hours in the most profound peace, separated with the same phlegm, without tumult, and without having occasioned the least complaint.

The fatal day arrived, which was the 20th of March, 1786. But, since the 6th, the magistracy had retracted every thing which it had agreed to on the 20th of the preceding December, and had issued a proclamation on this subject, which excited a universal ferment in the towns.

The citizens assembled at the same place, and in the same manner, which they had done three months before. The council were met to the number of thirty-one members, the majority of whom favoured the law of 1674; and the others, the new one. The body of citizens, still without arms, held firm, and determined not to separate till their demands were granted. This constancy disconcerted the refractory counsellors, who made their retreat, leaving the field open to their adversaries. These immediately deputed three from among them, in order to receive, in the name of the council, the oath of the body of citizens to the new law: they themselves being bound to the old one by an oath, which engaged them till the 20th of October following, promised to swear at that period to that which had just been established.

Whilst waiting, the citizens took two steps of importance; they created a College of Commissaries, specially destined to watch over their interests, for the support of their rights. These were really tribunes of the people; and in the beginning of July, they published a manifesto, in which they announced the irrevocable resolution of abolishing the law of 1674.

This manifesto soon led to a still more decisive operation; and on the 2d of August follow-

ing, they again formed themselves in the great square, in eight companies, ranged in a circle. The magistrates who filled the old regency were requested to enter into the circle. It was known beforehand, that, out of thirty-seven, thirty would refuse: five only presented themselves; the two others alleged the obligation of an oath, which bound them till the 12th of October; but gave assurances that they did not the less approve of what had passed, and that they would readily accede to it the moment they were disengaged from their oath.

The body of citizens then turned out the thirty refusing counsellors, preserving to them, however, the other employments with which they might be invested, and which had not a direct connexion with general affairs. By that they wished to shew, in the most unequivocal manner, the purity of their intentions, and to do away all suspicion that their conduct had been dictated by party animosity. The College of Commissaries was solemnly installed in place of the Assemblies. The body of citizens separated, in the midst of an immense crowd of the people and of strangers, whom curiosity and the novelty of the spectacle had attracted thither from all parts of the Republic, and who returned, highly astonished at the order and the profound

profound calm, which nothing had been able to interrupt, in the whole course of this important operation.

The 12th of October, at length, arrived: things passed with the same tranquillity which had already been observed in the preceding assemblies. The new regency, which, during the interval, had been completed, was installed with great ceremony; it took the oath to the new law, and the irrevocable abolition of that of 1674, and fixed the seal to the Revolution of Utrecht.

It may well be imagined, that in the course of this Revolution the voice of negotiation had not been neglected on the part of the people, accustomed to do nothing but with too much measure and method. Deputies on both sides had been named; but those of the Prince could not produce any formal powers, and those of Utrecht soon perceived that the wish was to lull their vigilance asleep, and to occasion the loss of a precious opportunity: so that these conferences, broken off almost as soon as begun, remained absolutely without effect.

It was equally expected that the States of the Province would refuse their sanction to the abolition of the old law. The composition of these states was extremely vicious and defective; they

were formed of the equestrian order, of the clergy, and of the cities. The cities, which were five in number, to wit, Utrecht, Amersfort, Wych, Rhenen, and Montfort, formed only one voice; each of the two orders had its own: thus the States being formed of three voices, it was sufficient that the two privileged orders were agreed (and this was always the case) to govern the Province at their will. The vice of this form is still more sensibly perceived, when it is recollected, that the equestrian order was reduced to a dozen of nobles, and that of the clergy to a number at least as small. These two orders left Utrecht at this epoch, and retired to Amersfort, under the protection of some troops which the Prince had placed in that city; and they continued to look upon themselves as the States of Utrecht, though the absence of the deputies of the cities rendered their assembly absolutely unconstitutional.

Notwithstanding this separation, the old law was not the less abolished, and the example given by the Province of Utrecht could not remain without effect on the two others, which were subject to that oppressive law. Gueldres itself, at first, joined in the measure; and its efforts to escape the tyranny led to serious scenes,

scenes, in which the Stadtholder, for the first time, substituting open violence instead of reason, in some measure gave the signal for civil war, and provoked, on the part of the States of Holland, resolutions, which, according to all probability, might lead to its destruction.

Gueldres was then become the real seat of the power of the Stadtholder. A numerous nobility, in general not very rich, needed the Prince's favour, in order to procure themselves wealth and distinction: hence his court was crowded with them; the lucrative places and employments were bestowed on them. William could refuse them nothing; and his favours were repaid by a boundless and servile devotion, which occasionally led to the most violent enthusiasm. We may judge of the extent and solidity of the Stadtholderian power over the States of a province, where he had such supporters. Nevertheless, this excessive partiality was not so universal, but there were still to be found among the regents some generous minds, who, refusing to bend their knee before the idol, and faithful mandatories of the people they represented, dared to sustain their rights with the courage and intrepidity of virtue, and made the voice of justice be heard in the midst of corruption, regardless of the dangers to which

their heroic conduct, against a numerous and violent majority, exposed them. The family of *Capellen* was distinguished, above all others, by its incorruptible firmness. Never had the people a more constant defender on every occasion, when its claims were just; nor the Stadtholder an adversary more inflexible at all times, when his pretensions exceeded the limits of the constitution.

On the other hand, the spirit of patriotism and of liberty displayed itself in the towns, among the sensible citizens, with so much the more energy as it had been more oppressed. Addresses, signed by thousands of citizens, were written and presented to the States, which left no room to doubt their expressing the general wish of the Province. They followed each other with such rapidity, and arrived from so many quarters at the same time, that the States, undoubtedly embarrassed, and fearing ultimately their inability to resist, published, at last, a resolution which overwhelmed the liberty of the press, and prohibited the citizens from presenting addresses in a body to the Sovereign.

This was an open violation of the most inalienable rights of the nation; it was the completion of despotism: but such was the absolute

lute power of William V. in that Province, that his will there seldom experienced even the most trifling resistance.

However, at this particular time he did experience it, on the part of the two towns of Elburg and Hattem: the first peremptorily refused to publish the resolution of the States against the liberty of the press, and the privilege of the citizens to address themselves in a body, by petitions, to the Sovereign. Hattem resisted an order issued still more directly by the Stadtholder. The Prince had conferred on a private foldier of his body-guard the office of Burgo-master of that town, which considered itself insulted by such an appointment. In this it perceived nothing less than the most egregious abuse of authority; a mark of intolerable contempt; and nothing could induce it to receive such a person for its chief magistrate. Elburg and Hattem were two very small towns; but in a State, which by its constitution is free, there are no small towns. The States felt themselves very much offended, and partook in the personal resentment of the Prince, who, at their requisition, prepared without delay to send troops against the two refractory towns. The news arrived speedily at the Hague, where it excited extreme solicitude, and occasioned an  
extraordinary

extraordinary fitting, the object of which was, to deliberate on the danger with which public liberty was threatened: a subject so serious kept the assembly in profound silence. It received a character still more august from the observance, this day, of a form seldom observed but in urgent cases; and which always implied, that it was to be occupied by great objects concerning the immediate welfare of the Republic. This was the reading of a resolution taken, in 1663, by the Grand Pensionary De Witt, by which every member was authorized to express frankly and freely his opinion, whatever it might be, without any one being permitted afterwards to disturb him, on that account, and without incurring the penalty of a crime against the Sovereign.

After this ceremony, Gillaer addressed the assembly, and, in an eloquent speech of considerable length, presented a picture of the conduct of the Stadtholder since 1776, and demonstrated, that the present momentous crisis of the Republic was entirely the work of that Prince; he also proved that the existing troubles of the Province of Gueldres had no other source, owing to the composition of the States, whose members were almost all officers of his court, or people attached to his person, from the places they held under him; whilst the regencies

gencies of the towns were always, and every where, magistrates of his choice, &c. &c.; and he concluded by offering three propositions:

1. To write to the States of Gueldres, exhorting them to desist from all violent measures, and prevent the necessity of Holland employing means of defending the public liberty.

2. To write to the four other Provinces, for the purpose of prevailing on them to unite with Holland in common measures, relative to the maintenance of public tranquillity; and, above all, to prevent, by strict orders, the troops of their assessment \* from being employed against the citizens of the Republic.

3. To write to the Prince, exhorting him to merit the applause of the nation, by putting an end to the agitations of the country, which depended  
solely

\* The custom was to assign to each particular Province, in proportion to its population and wealth, a certain number of regiments of all descriptions, which composed the totality of the army. The States-General made this assessment, by virtue of which each Province remained charged with the payment of the regiments which fell to its share: hence the expression, that such a regiment is on the assessment of such a Province. The highest of these assessments was that of Holland, which, in the mass of expences of the union, contributed in the ratio of sixty to one hundred. Thus each Province retained the command of the troops of its assessment, since they were paid by it, without which the power of the Captain-General would have been unlimited.

solely on his will; and declaring, that if he persisted in using force, at the hazard of involving the Republic in a civil war, the States of Holland must be under the necessity of suspending him from the exercise of all his employments and dignities in their Province.

Of these three points, the two first were immediately and unanimously adopted. The third was also agreed to by fifteen towns, and taken *ad referendum* by the three others, which were Amsterdam, Delft, and the Brill, whose consent arrived next day, and the resolution was adopted immediately.

Notwithstanding the promptitude with which this deliberation was carried on, the resolution was still too tardy, and the mischief was completed during the very time employed in writing the letter to the Prince. It had been projected on the 4th of September, and on the 6th the disastrous news from Gueldres arrived at the Hague.

William V. had dispatched from his palace at Loo some regiments, which advanced against Elburg, with the artillery necessary to besiege it; but the event rendered this preparation unnecessary. On the first intelligence which was brought to that town of the march of the troops, the

the inhabitants, unable to resist such a force, and, nevertheless, too much animated by enthusiasm basely to bend their neck beneath the yoke, unanimously took the resolution of quitting the town. This generous, but desperate determination, was immediately put in execution. Women, children, old men, and soldiers, all forsook their natal soil, all embarked with their effects, and took refuge at Campen, a town in Over-yfel, situate on the other side of the Yfel; so that the regiments, on their arrival, found nothing but profound silence, and the solitude of a desert.

Imagine, if possible, the awful effect which this event, accompanied by all its circumstances, must have produced on the minds of Republicans, whom the cause of liberty had so long kept in a state of fermentation. The degree of interest and commiseration inspired by this deplorable crowd of inhabitants, of every age and sex, who presented the spectacle of their misery to their neighbours and confederates, asking an asylum from persecution; and lastly, the impulse of indignation which must have been excited and felt in all parts, against a Prince, whom they saw sustain the pretensions of pride by means of violence, and wickedly displaying the preparations of war against two unfortunate  
small

small towns, with whose weakness and total privation of all means of resistance he was well acquainted!

After taking possession of Elburg, the Stadtholderian troops proceeded to Hattem. The inhabitants of this town did not follow the example of those of Elburg, but wished to attempt a defence, in their situation impossible. The Stadtholderian general, Spengler, pointed the cannon against the gate, which was soon burst open, and the town was taken after a short resistance, in which some of the inhabitants and some Stadtholderian soldiers perished. There was, however, sufficient time to save the women, children, and old men, and even a great number of the inhabitants, with greater facility, as the town was separated from the province of Over-ysel only by the river Ysel, which washed its walls. These events had an influence on the style of the letter, which, according to the resolution, was to be addressed to the Prince. Circumstances being no longer the same, the States of Holland adopted a different language, and confined themselves to requiring him immediately to desist from the violent measures he had employed against the citizens of the Republic; and warning him that, if he refused, the States would suspend him from the exercise of all his functions

functions in their Province. They allowed him twenty-four hours to determine, and give his answer. This answer soon arrived, and was such as had been foreseen. The Prince replied, that his sentiments concerning the means of coercion and of conciliation were sufficiently known, as also the preference which he always gave the latter; to the former he never had recourse, but when conciliatory measures were found ineffectual; that it was not without regret he had commanded the troops to march against Elburg and Hattem, but that he had received the order from the States of Gueldres, which, in his capacity of Captain-general of that Province, he was obliged to obey.

The Prince being thus externally supported by constitutional forms, and foreign powers, which were not well acquainted with the abuses and the true situation of affairs, might thereby be deceived, and think that reason was entirely on his side. But those who knew the composition of the States of Gueldres, and their absolute dependance on the Stadtholderian Court, from the love of money and of places, judged very differently; and well knew, that, by a shameful collusion, when the States gave orders to the Prince, it was, in fact, the Prince giving orders to himself.

This

This assumption might mislead the Dutch Patriots less than the others; and the Stadtholders themselves were well aware that this answer was a mere deception; it was sufficient for them that it possessed merely the appearance of regularity, to persevere in their system. Thus the step taken by the Province of Holland, being eluded by the Prince, it was under the necessity of adopting severe measures, and of exerting itself to the utmost, to stop the progress of the Prince's enterprises against the liberty of the Republic.

The knowledge which Holland possessed of the character and intentions of the Stadtholder, would not permit it to wait, till the last moment, for taking precautions against the danger with which it was threatened. It was not enough to have prohibited the Prince from employing the regiments of its assessment against the citizens; an example, which had been followed by Over-ysel, Groningen, and even Zeeland, a Province at all times devoted to the Stadtholder: it felt the necessity of recalling, within its interior, all its troops which were dispersed among the other Provinces, and in the Generality. It had commanded the Prince to send them the orders necessary, for their entering into the territory of Holland; and William,

liam, after having endeavoured to evade this mandate, found himself under the necessity of obeying it.

Soon after the affair of the towns of Elburg and Hattem, the Prince discovering no disposition to desist from coercive measures; on the contrary, every appearance giving reason to apprehend, that the scenes of Gueldres would be renewed against the small towns of Utrecht; the States of Holland, at last, proceeded to the provisionary suspension of the Prince in his functions of Captain-general.

The proposition was made in the sitting of the 22d of September, and the deliberations were not long. It passed by a majority of sixteen towns against two, namely, Hoorn and the Brill; and the latter even confined itself to a simple declaration, that it did not concur in the resolution, and would remain in a state of strict neutrality. Amsterdam, whose defection had, some months before, embarrassed the Patriots, in the affair of the command of the Hague, had greatly changed since that time: that important city having returned to its first principles, shewed itself, on this occasion, much more zealous than the others; and insisted that the resolution should be founded on the unexampled attempts of the Prince, and the detestable use which he

made of the armed force. The other towns, more calm, rejected this amendment.

The sword was thus drawn by both parties; and Holland prepared for its defence, on the side of Gueldres and Utrecht, by establishing a cordon of troops, whose head-quarters were at the fortress of Waerden, exactly on the frontiers, and only a few leagues distant from the city of Utrecht.

The Great Frederic was now no more: his death, which was a calamity to Prussia, and to Europe, proved a fortunate event for the Stadtholderian party. It is well known that this great man, entirely occupied in rendering his country flourishing at home, and respected abroad, attached no importance to the quarrels which divided Holland, nor to the pretensions of his nephew, the Stadtholder. He restricted himself to good offices, to some representations made, from time to time, to the States; and it is probable that, tired with their altercations, he would himself have concerted with France an arrangement of some kind, to which the Prince would have been obliged to submit.

His successor opened a new field to the hopes of the Stadtholderians.

The Princess, neglected by her uncle, flattered herself she possessed an infinitely more powerful

powerful influence over her brother; and she was not deceived. Hertzberg, whose importance was almost nothing under a King, who left little to be done by his Ministers, commenced a new career, and became a principal personage with a monarch, averse to business, entirely abandoned to his pleasures, and who desired nothing so much as to devolve on his Minister the weight of the duties attached to royalty.

The intervention of the Court of Berlin in the troubles of the Dutch Republic changed, therefore, entirely the character of that epoch; and Hertzberg began his new authority, by sending a Minister-Extraordinary to the Hague. He made choice of Count de Goertz, an experienced negociator, long distinguished by the delicate and difficult missions confided to him by the Great Frederic, and which he fulfilled to the satisfaction of that Prince. He was a man of, perhaps, too lively an imagination; but irreproachable in his manners, noble in his character, virtuous in his principle, and scrupulously attached to his duties.

This Minister, long accustomed to regulate his political conduct only by the express instructions of his Court, commenced his negociation in a manner which readily discovered, to intel-

ligent observers, the nature of the instructions with which he was charged, and of the intentions of the Cabinet by which they had been dictated. Credentials are generally only a matter of form, necessary, without doubt, to verify the authenticity of the public character with which the person sent is invested, but which, in other respects, are confined to this notice, and contain no detail or discussion on the object of the mission itself. Those of Count de Goertz differed widely from this simplicity, and became, at the Hague, the subject of severe censure, and of universal discontent, on the part of the Republicans. They felt themselves offended by the species of violence, which the new monarch appeared desirous of offering to the Republic, by entering, so prematurely and without being invited, into discussions which only concerned her interior government. They were shocked, that the Court of Berlin should offer its mediation, since mediation, from its principle, can only be exercised betwixt two sovereigns, and which could not be recognised betwixt the Republic and its first subject. They were offended, that the severe resolutions, provoked by the misconduct of the Prince, should be termed in the credentials, "unprecedented oppressions, innocently suffered by the Prince;" and

and they asked how, even in a case which admitted of mediation, it was possible to submit to that of the King of Prussia, who began by deciding the question, placing at once all the wrong to the account of the Republic, and all the right on the side of the Prince.

It is very probable, that Hertzberg, whose real merit did not equal his vanity, made it a point of honour to deviate from the track of the Great Frederic; and really considered the Patriotic Provinces as rebels, whom he was desirous of bringing back to their duty, and to whom it was necessary to use threatening language, rather than that of conciliation. It is equally probable, that it was on these principles he prescribed the conduct to be observed in Holland by Count de Goertz, and thereby composed his instructions, to which the latter conformed with the greatest exactness.

With such a guide, he could do no other than commit errors. Thus, the pretended conciliator immediately, and entirely, resigned himself to the influence of Sir James Harris, (now Lord Malmesbury); a man of amiable and insinuating manners, but the decided enemy of France, and an enemy to the Dutch Republicans, only because they were protected by her; the soul and support of the Stadtholderian party, only because that

party was diametrically opposed to her. This sentiment of aversion to France was, therefore, the regulator of all his affections: perfectly indifferent between the two factions, which divided the Republic, he would infallibly have united with the Patriots against the Stadtholder, had they given him hopes that they would second him in his animosity against France, and suffer themselves to be guided by his impulse. He was, besides, fertile in resources, and not very delicate in the choice of his means. Such was Sir James Harris, become the confident and counsellor of Count de Goertz. He avoided all connection with the Patriots, and attached himself exclusively to the Stadtholderians; and, although on his arrival he had paid a visit to the Grand Pensionary, it was a mere visit of *etiquette*, and was never repeated. His language was intemperate; and he made the Prince's interests so much his own, and connected them so closely with the honour of Prussia, that he treated, as an insult offered to the King, the resolution which suspended William V. from his functions of Captain-general of the Province of Holland. Thus, for a long time, his presence in Holland produced no other effect than that of embroiling affairs more and more.

Had

Had the Court of Berlin remained merely a spectator, or had its interference, divested of all partiality towards the Prince, confined itself to a declaration, that he would be powerfully supported in case he should be attacked in the prerogatives of the Stadtholderate, confided to him by the constitution, and recognised by his commission; but that it would leave him to himself with respect to all improper pretensions, which were not sanctioned by usage, more or less ancient; it is certain, that the evil would have cured itself, from the general necessity of tranquillity, and the insufficiency of the means left the Stadtholder to disturb it.

In fact, the Province of Holland had at its disposal the troops of its assessment. The Prince had received orders from the Provinces of Friesland, Groningen, Over-ysel, and even Zealand, prohibiting his employing their troops against the citizens of the Republic; so that he could only dispose of those of Gueldres and Utrecht. It must likewise be remarked, concerning the latter Province, that since the schism of the States, and the establishment of the nobility and clergy at Amersfort, the city of Utrecht had shut its treasury, and no longer paid the troops of the Province; and as it contributed to the public expences in the proportion of eighty

to one hundred, the burthen fell entirely on these orders, and on the town of Amersfort, which must very soon have been compelled to disband these regiments for want of means to pay them.

The Stadtholderian army, thus reduced to the regiments of Gueldres, did not, at most, amount to more than four or five thousand men; and could not, for an instant, counterbalance the force of the Province of Holland, whose troops were also strengthened by numerous free corps. William might have built some hopes on the Swiss regiments, then in the service of the Republic, which would have furnished him excellent troops; but the Patriots had foreseen this, and, at the solicitation of France, the Canton of Berne, to which the greater part of these troops belonged, desired they might remain neuter in the quarrel; and by ordering them to obey the States-General only, and not any Province in particular, forbade their acting in the internal dissensions of the Republic. From that moment they could no longer be considered as a support to the Stadtholder or his party.

William, on his side, had sought to diminish the forces of the Province of Holland, by the legion of Salm. Some months before, Holland, from a principle of economy, had demanded that

that a certain number of foreign legions, in the service of the Republic, should be disbanded, amongst which was that of Maillebois; and this reduction would have encountered no obstacle, had not an exception been made in favour of the legion of Salm, which had openly declared for the Republican party. William, who was not ignorant of these dispositions, objected to the exception, demanded that it should be disbanded as well as the others, and the States-General acquiesced in this demand. But as four fifths of this corps belonged to the assessment of Holland, they were kept in its pay, and the reduction could fall only on the other fifth; thus the amount of the forces, on both sides, remained obviously in the same relation; and the Stadtholderian cause could not have succeeded, if Prussia had not assisted it by violent means. Hence, all the endeavours to mislead the Court of Berlin by reports, either false, exaggerated, or extenuated, and the pains incessantly employed to confound the accidental prerogatives, revocable at the will of Holland, but which William determined to retain, with the constitutional prerogatives really inherent in his dignity, which the Republicans had no intention of destroying. Hertzberg, who appears to have been but little acquainted with the  
Dutch

Constitution, firmly believed that all these prerogatives, without exception, equally belonged to the essence of the Stadtholderate; and so strongly had he inculcated this idea into Count de Goertz, that the latter very seriously asked, if they thought the Great Frederic would have consented to give a Princess of Prussia in marriage to a simple Stadtholder of Holland, unless his authority had been extended by the privilege resulting from the the law of 1674?

It was absolutely impossible, that the Court of Berlin, keeping thus in the extreme, could ever bring matters to terms of reconciliation. It was necessary to negotiate with Utrecht, which, after the abolition of the law of 1674, had put itself into a state of defence, on the information that the Prince purposed restoring it by force of arms; and with Amersfort, whither the Prince had sent two regiments, for the protection of the equestrian order, and that of the clergy, which had retired thither. It was agreed, the same day, on both sides, to send back to Amersfort her regiments; and to Utrecht, the free corps, which had hastened in crowds to its defence: but Amersfort exacted, as the second preliminary point, and previously to entering on any discussion, that Utrecht should depose her new magistrates, to which that city absolutely refused

fused its consent. It was necessary to negotiate with the Province of Holland, concerning the command of the Hague, and the law of 1674; and also on another point of extreme delicacy. The Prince, in some letters addressed to the States of Holland themselves, had solemnly declared, that he considered the resolutions passed against him as "illegal and invalid." These resolutions were perfectly regular, since a resolution necessarily supposes a majority; and it has, besides, been seen, that some of them had passed by a unanimity of the towns, and many of the others by a majority of sixteen to two. Thus the Prince, in treating as a nullity the resolutions of the Sovereign, by a mere act of his own will, evidently rendered the sovereignty of the Province of Holland problematical, or set himself above it. The States were violently irritated by this insulting declaration, and seemed determined to hearken to no propositions, unless the Prince explained himself clearly on this point, by an express acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the Province. The affair was the more serious, as it had been preceded by that of the unfortunate towns of Elburg and Hattem, the remembrance of which, perpetually recalled by the daily succours furnished to their inhabitants by Holland, roused the indignation

dignation of the whole Republic. But, on the other hand, how could it be expected, that a Prince, who, till then, had never admitted the discussion of any of the points in question, could possibly submit to a condescension so humiliating to his vanity.

Stadholderians and Republicans were all in a perpetual motion ; propositions succeeded each other with great rapidity, but with little effect. The Regents of Gueldres shewed some disposition to come to an understanding on the law. Each of them individually confessed, that it was radically defective ; but, when they were assembled, the known inflexibility of William silenced them, no one daring to make the first proposition, lest he should incur the displeasure of a Prince, on whom his fortune entirely depended.

The confusion was still further increased by the singular situation of the States-General. Holland, Over-yssel, and Groningen, formed one party ; Gueldres, Friesland, and Zealand, supported the Stadtholder. There were, therefore, three voices against three. There remained the Province of Utrecht, which could throw the majority on either side ; but this Province had no longer States, either at Amersfort, whither the two orders repaired, without the deputations

tions from the majority of the towns; or in Utrecht, whither the majority of the deputation from the towns repaired, but without the two orders. The deputation from the Province to the States-General was therefore no longer legitimate, since the States, the source of its powers, had ceased to exist; and, in reality, what was done in the States-General now exhibited no regularity. Nevertheless, by an abuse, which was too much neglected by Holland, the vote of Utrecht continued to be counted; which being formed by deputies named by the old Regents, always joined Gueldres, and determined the majority in favour of the Prince.

This extreme complication formed a labyrinth truly inextricable, and offered no clue by which to escape. The interference of Prussia, misled by her prejudices, tended directly to a general overthrow; and England, by the agency of her Minister, Sir James Harris, accelerated the moment of the catastrophe.

France could not conceal, that her alliance with the Republic was destined to become a word without meaning, whenever the Republicans should fail in their efforts to maintain their liberty. Neither could she be ignorant, that the Prussian influence in Holland, if calculated

culated so as to be only an instrument in the hands of the Stadtholder against the Patriots, would prove as fatal to her as that of England. She therefore felt how indispensable it was to negotiate directly the affairs of Holland with the Ministry of Berlin, and to remove its prejudices, by enlightening it on facts, to act in concert to restore peace to the Republic, and to re-establish concord betwixt the two parties, without demanding any other sacrifices from the Prince than such as should be required by reason, justice, and the nature of the Constitution.

Count d'Esterno, the French Minister at Berlin, was instructed to open, and to prosecute this business. At the same time the Cabinet of Versailles sent a Minister-Extraordinary to the Hague, with very extensive powers, in order to assist the Ambassador, already loaded with the weight of a mission that became every day more intricate. For such was the nature and the complication of affairs, that, assuming a new face with every new event, they presented no longer any determinate point on which it was possible to found a negotiation; so that there remained no alternative but to trust to chances, and, if we may use the expression, to go on from day to day. The Count de Vergennes

geunes made choice of Rainneval, who had long filled, with high distinction, the then very important place of First Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and had merited and obtained the entire confidence of the Minister.

The Court of Berlin listened to all the explanations which Count d'Esterno had orders to communicate, and thence appeared to change its system. Being more enlightened, it discontinued the arbitrary and threatening tone; shewed dispositions to admit the concurrence of France in the work of conciliation, and not to reject, indiscriminately, all the demands of the Republicans; and sent instructions, much more moderate, to Count de Goertz, who, on his part, adopted the same modifications in his political conduct.

They thus began to approximate, which was one step towards conciliation. The propositions of the Republican party struck, particularly, at the right of patents, the law of 1674, and the command of the Hague. The Patriots had no idea of abolishing the Stadtholderate; they merely wished to reduce it to those marks of distinction granted by the commission. Now this commission, said they, implies neither command, nor patents, nor law, which are prerogatives so accidental, that they have never been  
granted

granted but by particular resolutions, with the express clause, that the Stadtholder should enjoy them only "during the pleasure of the States:" this clause, therefore, rendered them revocable at the will of the States. It was thus that William IV. enjoyed them, when the Stadtholderate was conferred on him under the hereditary form; and when his son succeeded him, his commission bore, that he should hold his office on the same terms as it had been held by his ancestors. These prerogatives, therefore, did not belong to the essence of the Stadtholderate, as William V. pretended; and the pretext, that he was responsible to his children, was invented, merely to furnish a plausible motive for his obstinacy, and to disguise his ambitious views.

Meanwhile the love of peace would have determined the Patriots to devise such forms as might not shock the feelings of the Prince. Thus they consented to a considerable modification, in the question of the command of the garrison of the Hague, by dividing it into two parts: the one, political, which would exclusively belong to the Sovereign; the other, purely military, which would remain, as before, in the Captain-general. They would, in like manner, have relaxed as to the law of 1674, consenting to retain all  
the

the articles which did not directly strike at the liberty of the towns, in the choice of their magistrates; and certainly, the hereditary Stadtholderate, thus stript of its abuses, and reduced to the mere terms of the commission, was still a dignity so important in the Republic, that, by passing it, a Prince of Nassau should not think himself dishonoured.

This doctrine was perfectly reasonable; it was the preservation of the constitution, the sacred deposit of which the Republicans were determined should not be violated in their possession; it restored to the nation the imprescriptible rights which it was important should not be rendered problematical. It left, absolutely, untouched all those of which, by the Constitution, the essence of the Stadtholderate was composed. In raising, at the same time, a sufficient barrier against the attacks of despotism on liberty; it exhibited, in the strongest light, the purity of the intentions of the Republican party, which, by reducing the contest to a few propositions, equally simple and moderate, clearly proved, that their progress had been marked only by the true interest of the public weal, and without any mixture of personal considerations, or particular animosity against the head of the House of Orange.

Count de Goertz was no longer restricted by the absurd instructions, which he had received on his departure from Berlin. Being now at liberty to treat with the Patriots, to hear their propositions, to weigh them in the balance of equity, and to be governed by the rectitude of his own ideas, nothing could have been more agreeable to him, than to find in the leaders of the Republican party a disposition so open, and so near to conciliation. To him their propositions seemed reasonable, and offered a basis which might be built on with some hope of success. His vanity was flattered by the idea, that a great Republic, and a house dear to his King, might soon be indebted to him for their tranquillity and harmony; and this vanity was, without doubt, that of a virtuous mind. In this hope he departed for Nimeguen, and gave an account of the state of affairs, and of the conditions on which the States of Holland made the return of order and of a sincere reconciliation between all parties to depend. Never did the friends of the Republic think themselves so near a happy conclusion; and never was their wish deceived in a manner more strange and peremptory. William V. totally rejected the terms of accommodation offered to him. He required that the States of Holland should

should acknowledge their errors; that they should, previously and unconditionally, re-instate him in his office of Captain-general, and in the unlimited command of the garrison of the Hague, after which, he said, he would employ means for the restoration of tranquillity. This was the language of a master, who wished to chastise his mutinous subjects, and to punish their spirit of insubordination and rebellion.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that this declaration was not delivered to Count de Goertz, in a diplomatic document, signed by the Prince: it was announced in a letter written by the Princess to that Minister, as if William dreaded putting his signature to such an extraordinary composition, which must necessarily be seen by the King of Prussia, his protector, who had, himself, advised him to a speedy conciliation. Be this as it may, Count de Goertz sent the original answer to the Hague, and hastened to return to Berlin: on the other hand, Rainneval, the French negociator, whose hopes had been destroyed, and the object of whose mission had been rendered unattainable by the obstinacy of the Stadtholder, quitted Holland, to give an account, at Versailles, of the unsuccessful issue of his negociation. These took place in the beginning of the year 1787.

It was impossible that William could have reckoned on the submission of the Republican party: and the Patriots expected to see him resort to violent measures on the first occasion. They found, therefore, that they were on the brink of war, and it was necessary to prepare for their defence.

If they had formed the majority in the States-General, they would have been out of danger; but they had too much neglected the means of obtaining it, and had trusted too much to the strength and wealth of the Province of Holland, whose concurrence alone they deemed capable of giving efficacy to the resolutions of the States-General; which was true only to a certain point. This object ought to have engaged their most serious attention.

In the second place, it was necessary that they should invariably preserve their majority in the States of Holland. It has been already seen, that in certain important circumstances it had been sixteen to three; but it often happened that it frequently sunk to ten against nine, and this state was extremely precarious. The defection of a single small town was sufficient to reduce them to a minority, of which they had seen a recent example. They could not divest themselves of these fears, but by  
some

some great effort, which should nearly unite all the Regencies in the same sentiments.

The citizens of Amsterdam were extremely patriotic. At Rotterdam they had become so, by the exclusion of a great number of individuals, who had formerly been introduced there by extraordinary circumstances, but who did not possess the qualifications required by the laws, to continue in the body of citizens. In both these towns, the Stadtholderian Regents formed the majority; and it was indispensable that this fatal majority should be destroyed, otherwise the Republican party must be exposed to certain ruin. This was effected by a sort of revolution, which merits some details.

The citizens of Amsterdam had, for a long time, been regularly organized; a great part of them armed and divided into several corps, each having its staff, its officers, &c. These were the natural instruments of the projected revolution, which circumstances rendered extremely urgent. The following is, in fact, what passed.

The town of Haerlem had sent a proposition to the States of Holland, the purport of which was to examine, whether it might not be advisable to grant the people a certain degree of influence in public affairs; and this proposition being adopted by a small majority, it was de-

terminated to appoint a commission for the purpose of discussing the question. The aristocracy was alarmed; but the citizens of Amsterdam entered warmly into the measure, and loudly demanded that the Regency should immediately form itself into an assembly, for deliberating on measures relative to this commission. The citizens, simple and frank in their proceedings, were completely duped by those Regents, who were devoted to the Stadtholderian Court, and were adepts in the practice of the most profound intrigue.

It was of the first importance to them to frustrate the designs of this assembly, by which they dreaded to be drawn on farther than they wished. They represented to the citizens its inutility; and, with an appearance of candour and entire concession, requested them to nominate which ever of the Regents they wished as deputy to the commission, solemnly promising that their choice should be adopted in council. The citizens, thus pacified, required any member whatever of the minority in council, without pointing out a particular person. The Regents then proposed M. Abbema,\* whom they

\* This is the same person whom we have since seen at Paris.

they knew to be extremely acceptable to them, and the Council instantly confirmed the nomination. From that time the citizens ceased to urge the assembly on the subject. The Regents, however, very soon deprived them with one hand of what they had conferred with the other. They sent to the Hague three new deputies to the States of Holland, to be joined with the two which composed the ordinary deputation: these were M. M. Muilman, Munter, and Van-der-Goes, all determined Stadtholderians; so that the suffrage of Amsterdam, then consisting of five voices, was absolutely at the command of the Regents. The three received instructions to unite with the two old deputies in the demand, that M. Abbema should be a member of the commission, but, above all, to vote with the equestrian order.

The States being assembled, and the deliberations opened, Dort and Haerlem, at first, insisted that the commission should be restricted to seven or nine members, to be chosen from among the persons most distinguished for wisdom and knowledge; and immediately the body of nobility made a motion, that each town should furnish a commissioner, as well as the equestrian order. This proceeded to a vote, and the city of Amsterdam taking the side of

the nobility, as well as the nine towns, who usually voted with them, their motion was supported by a majority of ten to nine. The same thing happened when it became necessary to chuse commissioners from each particular town. The nobles immediately proposed M. Abbema for the city of Amsterdam, as they had, doubtless, concerted with the three new deputies; otherwise it certainly was not on him their election would have fallen: but the eighteen others were chosen in a manner altogether absurd and ridiculous. They were hot-headed Stadtholders, and so notorious for their incapacity, that it was impossible to hope for any exertion or report from them on this subject.

The cunning of the Regents of Amsterdam thus produced two effects instead of one. The important proposition of the town of Haerlem was by this means eluded, and the Patriots relapsed into a minority in the States; two evils which required a sudden remedy.

The moment was favourable. The citizens, for some time past, had chosen, after the example of Utrecht, a certain number of representatives, appointed to support their rights in council, and to give a more simple and less embarrassing action to their influence. The nominations were just finished. Of five colo-  
nels

nels who commanded the citizen-army, the one who was on duty was sincerely attached to the cause of liberty ; and the four others, on whom some suspicions had fallen, endeavoured to obviate them. The only concern now was to communicate the first movement to this immense machine, in order to obtain a reform in council. Matters were in equal readiness at Rotterdam ; and such was the connection of interests betwixt these two cities, that the example of the one was immediately, and almost necessarily, followed by the other. But which of the two should set the example? What now appears to us so simple, because these events are so long past, seemed then surrounded with every kind of difficulty, to those persons who should hazard their personal safety.

Reflection, by discovering, and also by exaggerating, the danger of the enterprise, was ingenious in furnishing reasons for rather waiting than setting the example. Hence resulted a fatal indecision; and time, so precious in critical circumstances, was lost in discussions alike tedious and unprofitable, during which the opportunity might escape, and not return for a great length of time.

At last, after many resolutions, Amsterdam took its determination. For on the 3d of April,

April, the citizens, indignant at having been deceived by their Regents, in the affair which has just been detailed, presented a petition to the Council demanding—1. The immediate recall of the three new deputies to the States, *Muilman*, *Munter*, and *Van-der-Goes*, as having betrayed the general will of the city of Amsterdam. 2. That the remaining deputies, *Van-Berker* and *Visscher*, should be ordered, at the next meeting of the States, to disavow the conduct of these three deputies. 3. And lastly, the power of commencing a prosecution, in due time and place, against these three deputies, as being guilty of treachery, and for their perpetual exclusion from the deputation of Amsterdam to the States of Holland.

The Regency did not dare to refuse any of these three points; in consequence it took a resolution, and confirmed the principle, that the success of intrigue and dishonesty is only transient, and ultimately turns against those who have the calamitous courage of employing such odious means.

This triumph of the citizens had given the Patriots the majority in the States of Holland, and still more demonstrated the urgent necessity of securing it, in such manner, as that the efforts of intrigue should not endanger it in future.

ture. Secret conferences were carried on without interruption: night and day all was in motion. And as this was an affair which concerned all the friends of liberty, those most distinguished in the other towns had hastened to Amsterdam, to assist their brethren with their knowledge and their advice. The societies of citizens, which had been formed at this time, remained permanently assembled; every motion proposed was scrupulously discussed; and after having examined all the possible contingencies, and the resolutions to be adopted in each of them, it was, at last, decided, on the evening of the 20th of April, that the grand operation should be executed on the day following.

On the eve of a crisis so important, it may easily be imagined that no person slept the whole night, and this was fortunate. Instantly after the decision, the Council of War, on which the most momentous part of the work must necessarily devolve, were not agreed. Among the great number of officers of which it was composed, many were deficient in firmness, and, perhaps, not cordially nor perfectly well disposed. Hence resulted a wavering of opinion, extremely dangerous in circumstances so serious, when every instant was of great value. This fluctuation continued the whole night, and ex-

cited apprehensions that a delay of two days more might be the consequence; a delay which would have imminently endangered the success of the revolution, not only at Amsterdam, but likewise at Rotterdam; and it was not until morning, that the societies of the citizens succeeded in terminating the uncertainty of the Council of War, and in establishing, in all minds, a unity of plan and ideas.

There was no longer any hesitation; and on the same morning, the 21st of April, at eleven o'clock, all the companies of the citizens were collected at their usual quarters, whilst six of them took post at the Town-house.

The Council of Regency was met, and until two in the afternoon no petition, on the part of the citizens, had been presented; for it seemed that all minds were so extremely heated at this decisive moment, that they were not yet capable of clearly understanding each other. The Council then proposed to adjourn, and were about to depart. The Regents were most respectfully intreated to remain a few minutes, which they did, without displeasure or difficulty. The deputation of citizens soon after appearing, was admitted, and presented to M. Hooft a printed address, in which it demanded the dismissal of nine counsellors, namely, M. M.

*Fr.*

*Allewyn, Dedel, Graafland, Beels, Muilman, Munter, Calkoen, Van-der-Goes, and Lampfens.*

The deputation retired, and the Council began a deliberation which lasted two hours. During this time, the address was read aloud to each of the companies of the citizens individually, and all, without exception, received it with general acclamation, and a universal huzza, thrice repeated. It may, therefore, be said, that the will of Amsterdam had never been expressed in a manner more extensive, nor less equivocal. Acclamations resounded from every side, but above all from under the windows of the Council, which, having finished its deliberations, informed the citizens that the law did not permit it to pronounce the dismissions demanded, but that the address should be inserted in the register. The citizens, by no means satisfied, repeated their claim, and the Council, renewing their deliberations, decreed, that "those coun-  
" fellows who are not declared dismissed from  
" their post, should act in concert with the  
" Council of War, and the body of citizens, in  
" order to preserve the tranquillity of the city,  
" and to promote the general interests." This was the exact expression of the resolution. It satisfied all minds; the city was, intoxicated  
with

with joy. M. Hooft, a respectable old man, was conducted to his house by an immense crowd of people, of all sorts, and even by that populace so much dreaded, but which displayed dispositions infinitely better than could have been expected. Expresses were dispatched immediately to all parts of Holland, Groningen, Over-yfel, and even to M. de Capellen, in Gueldres, immediately to spread the news of this great event. Some days after the revolution was completed, by filling up the places of the nine dismissed counsellors.

The scene at Amsterdam, of the 21st, was repeated two days after at Rotterdam: we shall not give the details, which were nearly the same, with only this difference, that the reform in Council fell on but seven members, and that the petition of the citizens was a thunderstroke to the magistrates, for which none of them were prepared. They had taken no measure of defence; the populace, in general very turbulent, and very easily excited in favour of the Stadtholder's authority, had not been previously fomented, because it was not expected to be wanted so very soon; so that the most profound tranquillity reigned in Rotterdam during the whole of that day. The seven magistrates were deposed, and their places supplied by others; in  
a word,

a word, every thing was completed, whilst several entire districts of the city were still unacquainted with what had passed in Council.

Perhaps we may be thought to attach too much importance to an event apparently so trifling, as that of the removal of seven magistrates, and the appointment of seven others. Those who think so are deceived. These changes in the magistracy were great events in the general history of the revolution, which, itself, had it been crowned with success, would have powerfully influenced the affairs of all Europe. In order to enable the reader to appreciate these facts according to their just value, we shall here insert some concise observations on the political situation of Rotterdam, that throw new lights on its revolution, as well as on that of Amsterdam, equally applicable to those which followed in some other towns, and those which we shall merely mention.

Rotterdam, like all the towns of the Province of Holland, was governed by a Council of Regency and a College of Burgomasters, and assistant officers. The Council was employed on the interests of the city, as connected with those of the States of Holland; consequently nominated the deputies to their assembly, received all the reports of this deputation, &c. which rendered

rendered it master of the vote of the city; it also, in concurrence with the Stadtholder, filled up the places of the Burgomasters and assistant officers. The College of these governed the citizens, regulated all their measures, convoked all their assemblies, &c. in such manner, that it indispensably required their attachment in all cases when it was wished to act in a body. It could not hope to labour effectually in the cause of liberty, with a College, whose members had been chosen by the Stadtholder, and the Council and his will seemed to be inseparably identified.

The College was renewed every year on the 1st of May. The preceding year, the citizens determined to emancipate themselves from this servitude, reclaimed their ancient right of choosing their magistrates themselves; but not daring to exercise them at this time, when they must have encountered too powerful an opposition, they very wisely referred these nominations to the States, who promoted their design, by appointing a College of assistant officers and Burgomasters, composed of genuine Patriots, and their choice experienced no opposition; for the authority which appointed them must necessarily be respected.

The

The new College truly and effectually protected the citizens, and by good and wise regulations freed them from all the impure elements which yet remained, placed itself at their head, and, uniting with the minority of the Council prepared the way, and, at length, put in motion the revolution which we have just sketched.

This happened on the 23d of April; and if the renewal of the College, which was to take place on the 1st of May, had been left to the Council, as formerly, it would infallibly have been filled by members devoted to the Stadtholderian cause; the citizens would have relapsed into their former insignificance, and the revolution would have been impracticable.

But a Council, purified, as it was this day, appointed magistrates equally pure to the College of Burgomasters and assistant officers; sent a Republican deputation to the Hague, added an important suffrage in the assembly to the Patriotic party against that of the Stadtholder; decided the majority irrevocably in favour of the former; and insured the success of the great revolution as far as it depended on the Province of Holland. Hence it is evident, that the exclusion of seven members from the Coun-

cil of Regency, and the appointment of seven others, was a most important event, and singularly remarkable in the estimation of those, who will take the pains to compare the vast extent of effects with the simplicity of their cause.

The first use which the regenerated Council of Rotterdam made of its power, was to send a new deputation to the Hague, and its admission into the assembly of the States rendered the sitting extremely turbulent. The old deputation, deeming those proceedings illegal which had taken place in their city, had remained at the Hague, and taken post in the hall of the States an hour before the opening of the assembly; so that all the members being met, there appeared two deputations from Rotterdam. The old one immediately produced an address from the displaced counsellors, in which they impeached the late proceedings at Rotterdam, as being entirely contrary to the law, and demanded the re-establishment of the antient order of things.

This address was supported in the name of the nobles by the Count de Roone, who spoke with much warmth, and concluded by moving that the address be received, the counsellors restored to their places, and the new deputation

tion

tion rejected. Dort and Haerlem then voted on the opposite side. Delft supported the opinion of the equestrian body; Leyden that of Dort and Haerlem. It was now the turn of Amsterdam. Van-berkel then rose, and, in a methodical and luminous speech, proved that the orator of the body of nobles had entirely deviated from the true question. "The constitution," said he, "does not permit the States of the Provinces to enter into an examination and discussion of the internal affairs of the towns. At this moment there appear to be, in the States of Holland, two deputations from Rotterdam: what is the true question before the assembly? It is to determine, whether the credentials of the new deputies be according to form or not. In the latter case, they cannot be admitted; in the former, they cannot be refused. This is the only point for the deliberation of the assembly, all the rest is perfectly extraneous; and the city of Amsterdam will not suffer a new doctrine to be introduced, in consequence of which, credentials, in proper form, should not be a sufficient title for the admission of deputations to the States."

Van-berkel then called upon the Grand Pensionary, entreating him to declare whether the

credentials were in the regular form. The Grand Pensioner having again read them, pronounced them perfectly regular, and on this single ground Van-berkel voted for the admission of the new deputies. The voting continued. *Gouda* gave no vote; and Rotterdam not being admissible to vote; on summing up, that of Van-berkel was found to be supported by a majority of nine to eight. Scarcely had the Grand Pensionary concluded, when the debate was renewed with fury. The nobles threatened to take *ad referendum* every thing, indiscriminately, that should afterwards be proposed to the States, and even to withdraw immediately from the assembly. The majority calmly allowed them to do as they pleased, and remained, contenting itself with their taking the affair of the new deputation *ad referendum*.

Next day the scene was still more animated. The new deputation took its place, but the old one was not permitted to sit with it; however, as a mere indulgence, it was allowed to remain in the hall, standing, and behind the seats. The deliberations began; and the Grand Pensionary, after having collected the votes, and particularly that of the new deputation of Rotterdam, was about to conclude, when Count de Roone, seconded by M. de Maaſdam, addressed

dress'd the assembly, and brought on a violent debate, in which the nobles talked in a very lofty and imperious tone; and treated the Grand Pensionary with excessive levity, on his having dared to decide and count the vote of Rotterdam, when the equestrian order had taken the affair of the new deputation *ad referendum*. (Let it be remarked, however, that this *referendum* had been only the opinion of the minority; that the opposition of the nobles was, consequently, unconstitutional, and the Grand Pensionary perfectly in order).

The clamour increased, and there was little prospect of a speedy termination to the debate, when Count de Roone, hurried away by the violence of temper incident to his age\*, and exceeding the bounds of decency, the Grand Pensionary could no longer preserve his usual temper. He rose with dignity, and addressing the Count—"Sir," said he, "I have had the  
" honour of filling the place of Grand Pen-  
" sionary fifteen years, and I think I know my  
" duty; it is not a young man like you that  
" shall teach it me; you who, for the last  
" hour, have neither known what you said, nor  
" what

P 3

\* The Count de Roone was then about twenty-two or twenty-three years of age.

“what you did. I must and will determine according to the majority.” At the same instant the Grand Pensionary let fall the hammer\*. It was observed, that the Count de Roone turned pale at this reproof, and was so much disconcerted by this decisive stroke of the hammer, that he could not recover from his vexation during the rest of the sitting.

We need not be surprized that this sitting was so tumultuous, that so much animosity was displayed on one side, and so much firmness on the other, since it was decisive on both sides.

The Stadtholderians, reckoning on their majority, had chosen the same day, (25th of April), to carry their propositions for recalling the Stadtholder to the Hague, restoring him to the command, &c. for dismissing from his authority the Grand Pensionary, Bleffwick, and substituting Rendorf, Burgomaster of Amsterdam. This very naturally explains the vociferation and the resistance of the equestrian order. It was truly a day of battle; and Sir James Harris, with whom every thing had been concerted, relied so strongly on success, that he had

\* This was the ceremony which announced the conclusion of the deliberation on any question.

had made preparations, eight days before, for giving a grand ball to celebrate the victory. In fact, the ball took place, only the object of it was changed.

Whilst the Republican party thus attached the majority of the States of Holland to the cause of liberty, scenes, far more serious, were on the point of opening in the Province of Utrecht. The Patriots of Holland had proposed the means of negotiation, for terminating the affair of the city of Utrecht; and the nobles, who had retired to Amersfort, seemed to embrace this means. Here again Republican sincerity was deceived by the spirit of domination; and the conferences which had been opened, were only a snare to entrap it; whilst they furnished to the Stadtholderians all the time necessary to prepare measures, on whose effects they had much more dependance.

In fact, it was known that the aristocracy of Amersfort had entered into engagements with that of Gueldres, and the Prince Stadtholder, and that this negotiation was connected with the old majority of the Council of Amsterdam: the latter suffered some indications to escape, which confirmed the first suspicions. The city of Utrecht being immediately interested in the affair, kept a keen eye on what was contriving

around her, and communicated every thing to the Patriots in Holland; at last it was discovered that William had dispatched seventeen couriers in one day, and given orders to the troops of Gueldres and Utrecht to hold themselves in readiness to march. These measures could not fail to excite a strong sensation, which the Prince endeavoured to suppress, by every means that could be contrived. Ostensible letters were addressed to the Register Bagel; paragraphs inserted in the public papers, &c.: nothing, in short, was omitted that could tranquillize the citizens, and lull the Patriots into a false security.

The advices from Utrecht became every day more alarming, and they were well-founded. Whilst the Republican party in Holland continued to negotiate with the aristocratical Regents of Utrecht, retired to Amersfort, the latter concerted with the Prince the means of attacking, and making themselves masters of Utrecht by open force. William actually advanced some troops. His plan was to form a cordon betwixt those of General Van-Ryffel and Utrecht, so as to cut off all communication betwixt that town and Holland. To execute this plan, required only to occupy certain principal points by detachments; such as *Maar-*  
*sen,*

*sen*, or *Zuilen*, *Meeren*, and the sluice of *Vreefwyk*. By the first of these positions, the communication with Amsterdam would be intercepted; by the second, that with Leyden and the Hague would be cut off; by the third, the Stadtholder would become master of the Rhine, and of a very important sluice, which forms the chief defence of the city. Utrecht would then find itself, in a manner, blockaded; without commerce, without provisions, and must very soon have been forced to capitulate. *Zuilen* and *Meeren* were already occupied by weak detachments. Such was the state of things on the morning of the 9th of May; they became infinitely more serious in the afternoon.

About two o'clock, it was known at Utrecht, that a battalion of the regiment of *Efferen* was on its march towards the sluice of *Vreefwyk*. The Regents of Amersfort had commanded quarters to be prepared for the soldiers. The Council of the town instantly assembled, and it was resolved, that without losing a moment, a detachment of three hundred citizens and auxiliaries should be sent to defend that post. M. d'Averhoul\*, one of the new Regents  
of

\* He came in the same year to settle in France, and was a member of the Legislative Assembly.

of the town, took the command of the detachment, and began his march.

It was at the village of *Juphatz*, that they met the battalion of *Efferen*, which retired into a little wood, where it placed itself in ambuscade, so as to be able to put the citizens betwixt two fires. The latter advanced, preceded by some chaffeurs, who apprised them of the danger, when they were no more than thirty paces distant from the enemy. They then received from the battalion of *Efferen* two successive discharges, which killed four citizens, amongst whom was M. *Visscher*, a young man only twenty, of great hopes, and aid de camp to M. d' *Averhoul*t. The citizens, on their side, returned the fire, and conducted themselves with great bravery and firmness. The action took place late in the evening, and was equally maintained on both sides, until M. d' *Averhoul*t was enabled to avail himself of three field-pieces, with which he had taken care to be provided. From that moment the advantage was decidedly in his favour. The regular troops gave way; they were pursued, and the route very soon became general, as was testified by the booty brought to *Utrecht*, which consisted of three stands of colours, twelve drums, a quantity of tents and baggage, and two hundred

and eighty muskets, which, doubtless, the soldiers had thrown away, in order to facilitate their flight. They fled on all sides, without union or order; some of them retreated to *Viane*, where they were stopt by the troops of the cordon of Holland. This battalion, consisting of eight companies, was thus, in the space of a few hours, almost totally disarmed and dispersed. M. d'Averhoulte fell back on *Juphatz*, where he passed the remainder of the night, and next morning, at break of day, he went and took possession of the post of *Vreeswyk*.

The news arrived at the Hague on the morning of the 10th; and it is impossible to express the sensation which it produced. On the one side, consternation seized the Stodtholderians, from the check which the regular and warlike troops had just suffered from a body of citizens, who had never before been in action, and commanded by a young magistrate, whose military career was limited to twelve or eighteen months service, and that in time of profound peace. On the other hand, the majority of the States of Holland, indignant at seeing the scenes of Elburg and Hattem renewed with increased fury, determined, at last, to take the noble resolution of coming to the assistance of Utrecht, and exerting all the means which the exigency required.

required. It is true, the constitution did not allow of marching troops into the territory of another Province, without the consent of the Territorial Sovereign; and the States of Holland resolved to declare to the States-General, that they fully recognised the truth of this principle; but to declare, at the same time, that they considered the union dissolved, by the hostility committed against the territory of Utrecht; and, lastly, to enjoin General Van-Ryffel immediately to suspend every officer, who refused to obey the orders of the Province of Holland to march to the assistance of Utrecht. On the breaking up of the assembly, a courier was dispatched to that General with this resolution.

The annals of the Republic, as far back as William I., do not afford an instance of a measure so violent. It is proper to present certain facts to the reader, to enable him to judge on the question of its legality.

The Prince wrote to the States-General, that it was at the request of the States of Utrecht he had ordered the troops to march, to oppose an invasion with which that Province was threatened. What he called the States of Utrecht was that assembly at Amersfort, composed, as we have already seen, of a part of the nobles and of the clergy, but deprived of the concurrence

concurrence of the towns forming the third voice in the States; for the presence of the troops did not leave the suffrages of Amersfort, in particular, free. It was, therefore, about ten or a dozen of individuals whom the Prince considered as the legitimate representatives of the whole Province. Here, as in Gueldres, at the time of the military expedition against Elburg and Hattem, William commanded these representatives to order him to march troops: a collusion, so perfectly well known, could not impose on any one; and the Stadtholderians themselves were not deceived by it; but it was sufficient for them that an appearance of form concealed the irregularity of the conduct of the chief, and they were no ways embarrassed by constitutional precision.

But even on the supposition, that an assembly of a few members of the nobility and clergy could have been considered as the legitimate States, and although it had even been free from all Stadtholderian influence, still it could not authorize, by its sanction, a military enterprise against Vreeswyk in particular. In fact, this district formed a seigniory immediately attached to the city of Utrecht. It was to the city of Utrecht, exclusively, that the territorial sovereignty of it belonged; consequently, it  
alone

alone had the right of sending troops, or permitting them to be sent, into that district; and the States, had they been legitimate and complete, could not dispense with its consent, without, at the same time, violating the act of union passed at Utrecht itself in 1579; the first article of which guaranteed the rights which belonged to each particular town.

Thus William, or, at least, this phantom of the States assembled at Amersfort, had, by this act, been the first to break the union; and the States of Holland, by declaring to the States-General that thenceforward they considered the union as broken, did no more than express, by a legal declaration, what the Stadtholderian party had just done by violence, in trampling on one of the fundamental articles of the act of union.

This resolution having been passed and decreed, the States of Holland supported it by actual measures. The legion of Salm was thrown into Utrecht; General Van-Ryssel was enjoined to give orders to the different regiments of the cordon to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's notice; and here began to be felt the defect of the military constitution of the Republic, which, in the sequel, had a most fatal influence on the army of the Province of Holland,

Holland, and laid the foundation of the misfortunes of the Republican party.

These regiments were, in truth, in the pay of the Province of Holland, to which they were bound by oath; but they were equally bound to the States-General by an oath, which did not admit of their serving against any other Province without a particular order. In times of peace and amity, these two oaths were compatible with each other, since the immediate Sovereign and the States-General, having but one will, could not give contrary orders. The contingency of a disunion betwixt the two Sovereigns had not been foreseen; the one might forbid what had been commanded by the other; and between these contradictory orders, the regiments must be at a loss which of them they ought to obey.

The difficulty, however, seemed to be removed, by the resolution which declared the union to be broken, and the notice given to the army of this resolution. But this every person interpreted according to the nature of his political opinions; and whilst some confined themselves to insisting on the obligation of the oath, as an obstacle from which they required simply to be relieved, in order to enable them to conform to the orders of the Province, others  
alleged

alleged the same obligation for absolutely refusing to submit.

This dangerous inconvenience could not be remedied, but by the sudden dismissal of all the refractory officers, and the substitution of others, and by exacting from the regiments a new oath, which should place them at the exclusive disposal of the States of Holland. Nor was it neglected to encourage the officers by some extraordinary gratuity, for the purpose of attaching them still more to their duty, from the consideration of their personal interest.

This measure, combined with the act of severity against the refractory officers, could not fail to succeed; and, in fact, several of them indicated their repentance, and testified their desire of returning to the service. The time was past. The States of Holland, persevering in their firmness, became inexorable.

All the measures of the Stadtholder's party were disconcerted in the States-General, in those of Gueldres, and in the assembly at Amersfort. It had, at first, expected to make itself master of the Province of Holland, by means of the majority which it had so long flattered itself it should obtain; and this majority had just been irrevocably lost, by the revolution in the magistracy of Amsterdam, and of Rotterdam.

terdam. Popular commotions, its other engine, had been every where suppressed; military measures had not been more successful. Since the defeat of the battalion of Efferen, in the affair of Juphatz, the Prince had formed at Sieft, in the neighbourhood of Utrecht, a small camp, consisting of two squadrons of the cavalry of Thuyl, the regiments of the Hereditary Prince, Munster, and the remainder of that of Efferen, which were infantry; and on two occasions, some strong detachments of Thuyl, attempting incursions into Utrecht, had been vigorously repulsed, and dispersed by a small number of Salm huzzars.

The party was enraged to the last degree by these misfortunes, and then it was that the spirit of hatred induced the States to adopt resolutions, in which reason and the constitution were equally disregarded.

The States of Holland had, a short time before, passed a resolution, requiring the Stadtholder to send those regiments into the country of the Generality, which belonged to their assessment, and still remained in Gueldres; for this very plain reason, that they did not chuse that these regiments should be employed either against themselves or Utrecht; and, in case of refusal, signified that the Province of Holland

would cease to pay them. It was now exactly the time for supplying the funds. The Gueldrians, who did not wish to send back the troops, and who were not able to pay them, took a resolution so strange, that it would scarcely be credited were it not well authenticated. This was to write to the States-General, to request them to open a loan in the name of Holland itself, the produce of which was to be applied to the payment of these regiments. Thus, with the money of Holland, they proposed to make war on Holland, and on the Province of Utrecht.

The Patriots were in despair. Mediation, if it could have been obtained, would, at least, have gained them time. France, who found it much more easy to give them advice than to furnish them troops, testified to them, that she would willingly admit the Court of Berlin into the mediation; and as England had equally indicated in a memorial, presented by Sir James Harris to the States-General, the desire of co-operating by her mediation to the re-establishment of the tranquillity of the Republic, as soon as his Britannic Majesty should be requested to do so; the Cabinet of Versailles exhorted them not to reject the intervention of this  
third

third power, with whom it had no objection to participate in the work of mediation.

This political operation, thus imagined, was a conception really monstrous, and its execution truly impracticable. The Court of Berlin, at first, expected to comprise in its mediation, not only the differences between Province and Province (which was very simple, for what is called mediation is applied only to differences between two sovereigns, and the Provinces of the Republic had each their own sovereignty, which rendered them perfectly equal among themselves), but also the internal difficulties of the Province of Holland relative to its Stadtholder; which was unfit to be proposed, and contrary to all the opinions on the law of nations; since the mediation would have placed on the same level the Province of Holland and its Stadtholder, that is to say, the Sovereign and its first Magistrate.

If the mediation of Prussia presented a difficulty thus serious as to the point of right, that of England presented one no less insurmountable in point of fact. In the state of fermentation to which men's minds had increased in the Province of Holland; in their irritation against England, in particular, could there be conceived a possibility of bringing them to listen, even

common patience, to a proposition of this nature? It has been seen by what efforts they had been prevailed on to approve the first idea of mediation, when the question still was that of France alone; whom they looked on, however, as their only friend. What would it have been, if the intervention of England had been proposed to them, whom they considered as their most dangerous enemy; whose corrupting gold, they knew, had seduced and misled the regiments of Holland, till then faithful to the cause of Liberty; when they were fully informed that multiplied seditions, which broke out successively, or all at once, in a great number of places in the Republic, were equally the production of the same power; that the signal of disorder and of carnage, in Zealand, had been given by M. Kinkel, a naval officer, and a fanatical and assiduous adherent of Sir James Harris, still more than of the Prince Stadtholder; when they saw, at the very moment in which they were busied with these ideas of mediation, a dreadful insurrection at Breda, &c. another so terrible between Moerdyck and Rotterdam, that the free corps repaired thither in numbers, and with artillery? The Province saw these movements, and knew the origin of them; and in these circumstances could it de-

termine to confide the balance of its interests to the same hand, which then seemed only intent on its destruction? It was a task impossible to be executed; the heads of the party did not hesitate to regard it as such, and declared that none of them could take it on them without imminently exposing not their reputation only, but their very life.

If it was impossible to accept the mediation of England, it was nearly as impossible to reject it, without, at least, rejecting those of Prussia and France; and this conduct presented dreadful and imminent dangers. In such a difficult extremity, to take *ad referendum*, and to temporize, was a measure which, at first, presented itself to their mind; but this was to suspend, not conquer the difficulty.

In seeking an egress from the labyrinth in which the Patriots found themselves entangled, they were stopped by an idea that appeared to them likely to remove the obstructions; and to conduct them evenly, but by a much easier path, to their aim. This was to abandon the plan of a public mediation, and to substitute in its place one that was merely private and confidential; the seat of which would have been at Versailles, whither Holland would have sent a person distinguished for his knowledge, and

by his zeal for the cause of Liberty. He would not have been invested with any character that could awaken the least suspicion. He would have entered into conferences with the Count de Goltz, the Prussian Minister at Paris, in the presence of the Count de Montmorin, who would have held the scales between them. He might, at first, propose an armistice; but without withdrawing the troops of Gueldres and Holland from the positions they then occupied; the first in the Province of Utrecht; the others in the line of the *cordons* on the frontiers, and even in the city of Utrecht. It appeared, at the first glance, more natural to withdraw altogether the troops of both parties; but local circumstances would not permit this measure, which placed an advantage on the side of Gueldres, that nothing could compensate on the side of Holland. When this point should be regulated, it was intended they should explain themselves on the plan that we have now developed; to restore to the Princess the Stadtholderian authority, of which the Prince, her husband, was then dispossessed. These two principal points once determined, the rest could not be exposed to serious difficulties; and the negotiation would be terminated without any intervention of England, and in a manner with which it

it seemed, to them both parties must be satisfied.

The Patriots fixed their choice on M. Paulus, undoubtedly the fittest man belonging to the Republic, to conduct so delicate and important a business. It was immediately confided to the French Minister, who highly approved of the general idea, and of the choice of a negotiator in particular.

Nevertheless, to establish the concert on this subject between France and Prussia, required a certain time; and when it should be agreed on, and the Dutch negotiator should have arrived, the debates on the thing itself must necessarily have a certain duration; and it was possible, that in the interval the Stadtholderian troops might attempt, against the city of Utrecht, some *coup-de-main*, the success of which might still derange all these measures. It was therefore essential, that nothing should be wanting that might contribute to the defence of that city. Its garrison was considerable; it had artillery, but it wanted engineers and artillerymen, which was every day more sensibly felt. The Patriots requested an immediate supply from the French, who sent them a hundred excellent cannoneers, with some officers as distinguished for their merit as their bravery, under

direction of the Chevalier de Bellonet, a superior officer of engineers, universally known in the French army by his eminent talents in that important department of the military art. On his arrival at Utrecht, he caused to be constructed the external works necessary to the defence of the place, as far as the time and urgency of circumstances would permit. The artillery-men entirely fulfilled the idea that had been formed of their skill and courage; batteries were erected in places where the vicinity of the enemy indicated their utility; and on the first attack made by some Stadtholderian regiments, the fire which they were exposed to was directed in so destructive a manner against them, that they easily discovered the direction of the artillery to be no longer in the hands of the Dutch.

But in yielding to the intreaties of the Patriots, by sending the artillery they required, and in approving the idea of a confidential mediation, France earnestly insisted that the States of Holland should write to the Princess a letter suitable to circumstances; and which, without abasing their dignity, might comprise, at least, a commencement of satisfaction, adapted to suspend the military measures of Prussia, till the moment when the way of conciliation being resumed,

refused, might still leave some hope of a peaceable and amicable arrangement.

Nothing could equal the repugnance of the Patriots to that measure, which humiliated them in their own estimation. No satisfaction was due; they had the deepest conviction of it; France itself agreed to it:—"Although," said she, "we agree that no satisfaction is due to the Princess, we still think that it will be expedient to appease, in some manner, the King of Prussia, and to do what will be suitable, in order to make him forget the affront which his sister has experienced." This advice it was easy to give, but by no means so easy to follow. "When we have digested," said the leaders of the Republican party, "the sketch of a letter exactly such as the Cabinet of Versailles proposes to us, who will be answerable that the King of Prussia will be satisfied, and withdraw his troops? And if he be not satisfied, how far can we depend on France? If, after having obtained of us a satisfaction which we do not owe, the King of Prussia still remains in arms, in order to support the pretended rights of the Stadtholder, will France support us, or will she advise us still to yield? for she will have equally to allege the reasons by which she determines us to-day

“ day for satisfaction; that is to say, war, and  
“ its consequences, so disastrous to the Repub-  
“ lic.”

These objections were, unfortunately, too well founded. The Court of France, absorbed in pleasures and intrigue, tore itself from them with regret, to bring back its attention to the affairs of Holland, which presented it with nothing but barren and complicated discussions; and shewed no disposition to succour the Republicans of Holland, by any other way than that of counsels and negotiation. The Patriots, however, could not yet be persuaded that France would be so blinded by her particular interests, as to abandon their cause, which was her own; to leave them to be crushed, and, consequently, to deliver up Holland to Prussia and England; and thus lose, by the most monstrous carelessness, all the fruits of a valuable alliance, which gave her the means of, at least, counterbalancing the English power on the seas. From reflections so natural, issued a feeble ray of hope, which prevented them from entirely desponding. On the other hand, the duty which they imposed on themselves to attempt every thing, in order to avoid reproach; and, in short, the urgent necessity of driving away a foreign army from the frontiers of the Republic; de-  
I  
termined

terminated them to yield, and write to the Princess the letter of satisfaction the French Minister had required.

The report of this intended letter was made to the States of Holland towards the end of the month of August, and was taken *ad referendum*. When the intelligence of it arrived at Amsterdam, the opposition to it was manifested in a manner extremely violent; not only among the citizens, but even in the council, in which were united all the wisdom and abilities that Amsterdam could boast. The sensation in this city was more lively than at the Hague; and its expression more open and energetic. The pusillanimity of France, in these critical circumstances, was there judged severely, and with much less respect; and had estranged all confidence; the opinion there was forcibly pronounced on the plan, and the real object of the journey of the Princess; there did not remain a shadow of doubt, that her arrival at the Hague would be the signal for a general insurrection and the destruction of the Patriots: and the mere idea that the Sovereign Assembly of Holland, with this conviction, would still write a letter of satisfaction, as if to thank her for the evils that she had it not in her power to inflict, appeared to the magistrates to be

be the deepest debasement, and drew from them a unanimous burst of indignation against a power so tyrannical, as to support, by an army, the demand of such manifest injustice. They were determined, they said, to break down the great dyke of *Minden*, to inundate all Holland, the instant that a Prussian regiment should appear in Gueldres, and to perish, to the last man, rather than submit to the law of a Foreign Monarch, who had received no offence from the Province.

Thus, the opinion of Amsterdam was directly contrary to the plan of the letter. To what degree would not the dignity of the States be wounded, should there be opened between them and the wife of their first subject, a species of negotiation, in which still the Princess, and not they, would play the principal character; and in which they would find themselves equally humiliated, either by her haughtiness, or by her clemency? The level, on the contrary, would be restored, if the States treated directly with the King of Prussia: in this manner, the regency of Amsterdam, in rejecting the plan of the letter, proposed to send to Berlin, with a letter addressed to the King, a deputation, consisting of four or five chosen persons among the most distinguished of the Republican party,  
in

in order to transmit the letter, to establish the facts in an incontestable manner, and personally support the cause of the States of Holland.

At length, on the 8th of September, the States of Holland assembled, in order to decree a definitive resolution on this subject. *The Equestrian Order, the Brille Enkhuyzen, Edam, and Medemblyck*, would not participate in this deliberation. There remained then only fourteen voices. *Dort, Leyden, Rotterdam, Schiendam, Gorcum, Schoonhove, Alkmaar, Hoorn, Monikedam, and Purmerend*, voted for the letter; *Haerlem, Delft, Amsterdam, and Gouda*, for sending a deputation to Berlin. Thus, the resolution passed by a majority of ten against four.

Whether this resolution was good or not, it had, at least, the advantage of fixing their ideas. This was a step which they had just taken, by delivering themselves from the uncertainty that harassed their minds; for in politics, and especially on such pressing occasions, nothing can be worse than to remain in a state of doubt.

The Patriots were eager, on quitting the Assembly, to communicate their success to the French Ambassador, who having been recalled almost

a fortnight before, was preparing to depart the next morning, after having accredited a *Chargé d'Affaires* to the Republic. He received this intelligence with the greatest satisfaction, and felt himself flattered to see his mission terminated by an operation, which promised happy consequences towards the re-establishment of repose in the Republic.

How liable are we to see our calculations entirely deceived, when founding our ideas on certain given facts, we draw our conclusions of future events by the single rule of probability! Who would not have thought that the resolution, which the States of Holland had just passed, though even the Princess might not be altogether satisfied, would, at least, have occasioned some discussion, more or less prolonged: that during this time France and Prussia might interfere, and so concert matters as to determine the two parties to an accommodation, in which the Princess might relax from the rigour of her pretensions, whilst the States might yet make some farther advances towards her claims? Neither the one nor the other happened.

It was on the 8th of September, that the resolution had been passed in the States of Holland, to write to the Princess on this fatal satisfaction; on this calamitous incident, which had

had now become the principal consideration, and had eclipsed every other object. On the same day that this resolution was made known to M. Thulemeyer, there was a copy of it sent to him, with an invitation to transmit it to the King of Prussia by the speediest means. It was on the same day also, that this Minister expedited his courier; and it was the next day, on the 9th, at half past eight in the morning, that this same Minister remitted to the Grand Pensionary, to be immediately communicated to the States of Holland, a note, which contained the ultimate determination of the King of Prussia, which irrevocably destroyed every hope of conciliation.

M. De Thulemeyer had received the order for it during the night, and some hours after the departure of his courier. In this note, the King insisted that an apology should be made to the Princess, his sister; that all those of whom she might complain should be severely and exemplarily punished; that all the resolutions passed on account of her journey should be immediately revoked, &c.; and his Majesty demanded that the States should come to a determination within the limited term of four days, at the expiration of which his troops had orders to enter the territory of the Republic.

It

It will, doubtless, be alleged, that this term of four days was much too long; for when the question is either to subscribe to opprobrium and dishonour, or to perish; the choice is so plain, that it is easily made. But the States could conclude on nothing without the opinion of the Regencies of the towns; who themselves were also bound, in a case of such serious importance, to consult the citizens, through their representatives; and in this respect the term was absurdly short. The Prussian note, however, was referred to a committee, which was ordered to make a speedy report to the States.

This imperious memorial, this language of an absolute master, who thus made known his will, was, besides, a bright ray of information, which completely enlightened all minds as to the true system of the Court of Berlin. It was then that the Patriots were more than ever convinced, that the whole affair of the satisfaction, and even of the journey of the Princess, was no other than a plan concerted between her and the King, her brother; who required only a pretext to interfere in the affairs of Holland, and to support the Stadtholderian pretensions by force of arms; whence it followed, that the negotiations of that power with France had  
been

been merely illusory. It was known that the Duke of Brunswick, on being appointed to the command of the army, had, at the same time, received powers that were, in some degree, unlimited; to enter upon business directly with the Princess; and to take such measures as they should jointly determine to be most convenient, without reference to the Cabinet of Berlin, otherwise than by a simple recital. Thus it was clearly perceived, that the orders, successively sent to M. de Thulemeyer at the Hague, issued immediately from the Cabinet of the Princess, instead of coming directly from Berlin.

On the other hand, it was ascertained that the Duke, since his arrival on the frontiers of the Republic, had regularly, and even several times in a week, sent emissaries to Givet, in order to learn the state of the military preparations of France in that quarter; and what was the real extent of that camp, which some months preceding had made so much noise. It is certain, that if the plan of this camp had been pursued, and carried into execution, this Prince would have been stopped by the risk of embroiling the King of Prussia with France, and of producing, from a miserable quarrel incited by family pride, a war which would involve England, and might easily become universal; and in re-

gard to himself it was, at least, doubtful, whether regard for his own glory would have suffered him to commit a reputation, justly acquired in the seven years war, to the hazard of a difficult and uncertain expedition, into a country which presents so many obstacles to attack, and so many facilities for defence. But his emissaries, by their unanimous reports, confirmed him in the certainty that every thing was perfectly quiet at Givet, which did not contain the vestige of a camp, nor any extraordinary preparation; and from that moment he perceived that he might dare every thing with impunity.

This conduct of the Court of Berlin, and of that of Nimeguen, was thus rendered extremely evident. The enlightened Patriots had, for some time, suspected it; they had long asserted that France was made the sport of Prussia; and France had persisted in its confidence, whether from sentiment, or fear of engaging in some vigorous measure, which it, perhaps, would have had neither the will nor the power to support. It was, however, this unfortunate apathy which completed the ruin of Holland.

The States of Holland, on the 12th, answered the Prussian memorial by a resolution which, in substance, purported—1. That they could

could not enter into any deliberation on the last notes transmitted by M. De Thulemeyer. 2. That there would be sent to Berlin a deputation, consisting of two members of the States, in order to represent to his Prussian Majesty an exact account of every circumstance which had occurred, relative to the journey of the Princess. 3. That a letter should be previously written to that Monarch, to enquire if such a deputation would be agreeable to him. 4. That there should be transmitted to the Prussian Minister, and to the *Chargé d'Affaires* of France, copies of the resolution, with a request that each of them would forward it to his Court.

They did not so far deceive themselves as to found any hopes on this resolution, but, at the same time, they more earnestly than ever solicited the assistance of France; and, by great exertions, these succours might still arrive in time; but there was not an instant to lose, if they wished to save the Province of Holland. There could no longer be a question as to assembling an army: that if three or four regiments, stationed on the frontiers adjoining to the Republic, were marched, and thrown into Utrecht, they might stop the Prussians, long enough, at least, for the arrival of the other

troops, which were to follow in succession. This proposition was made at the Hague to Count D'Esterhazy, then Commandant at Givet, to send, at least, some of the regiments under his command. His answer was, as might be easily foreseen, that he was not empowered to take such a step. France, besides, promised the Patriots a great many succours, which never appeared, the rapidity of the Stadtholderian Revolution not having allowed them time to arrive.

Thus, solely dependant on their own internal resources, the Republicans had effected the inundations in the Province of Utrecht; but still this disastrous expedient had not succeeded, by reason of the drought, which had been prevalent during the whole of the summer of that year, and kept the waters of the Leck far below their usual level. In Holland, the great sluice of *Minden* was opened on the 12th, and the inundation which resulted ought to have joined that of the Leck, and covered the whole Province as far as Gorcum, had the Leck been opened on the south bank, which would have furnished water as far as the Waal, by inundating a small part of Gueldres. The Province of Holland was then no farther accessible, but by some very narrow banks, where two carriages could

could scarcely pass a-breast. These banks met at *Gorcum*, at *Viane*, and, still higher, at *Waerder*, *Nieverfluys*, *Narden*, and *Minden*; these, with *Utrecht*, were the points to be defended.

These places, mostly fortified by Cohorn, or according to his system, would have presented a sufficient length of resistance, had the garrisons been complete. But it has been shewn, how Corruption, by disorganizing the troops of the *cordon*, had diminished their numbers. The chasms had been filled, as much as possible, by the free corps, who testified the greatest alacrity; and the result was a force, no doubt, able to counteract, or even to annihilate, the Stadtholderian army; but incapable of singly resisting, for any length of time, the Prussians, so superior in numbers and discipline. It could not, therefore, act in any other manner, than by opposing to their march a resistance long enough to give the foreign succours time to arrive; if they should come from the quarter they had a right to expect them.

Utrecht had from seven to eight thousand men, without reckoning the armed citizens; and in this number of seven or eight thousand, there were not more than twelve hundred men of the free corps. The French artillery-men were all there assembled under the command of the *Chevalier de Bellonet*, who,

in case of a siege, promised a defence of several weeks at least. But it was the Rhingrave de Salm, who commanded the city and its garrison; and in the circumstances of the moment this was a very great misfortune, for it was become impossible to place in him the least confidence.

Possessing a great deal of wit, skilful, and even seductive, capable of assuming, with the utmost facility, all appearances, the better to attain his end; the Rhingrave de Salm was a man without any principle, but that of his own personal interest. His ambition was boundless. He had, from the commencement, connected himself with the Patriotic party, because by remaining united with that of the Stadtholder, he had no hopes but of an advancement much too slow for his impatience; whilst by attaching himself to the cause of Liberty, he opened a new course, which promised a fortune infinitely more rapid. Having made himself necessary to the Republican party, his hopes had no longer any bounds; none of his calculations were without some degree of probability; honours, authority, and riches, were all present to his imagination in the new and immense career which was open to him; and amidst all the catastrophes which might conclude the contest between the two parties,

parties, he saw one which might conduct him to a supreme dignity, of which, besides, his birth, rendered him compatible. To a certain point his expectations were realized. It was easy for him to gain the esteem and confidence of men simple and honest, such as the chiefs of the Republican party; from whom he took care to conceal his projects. He was entrusted with all their secrets, and frequently gave very good advice. He was more than once sent to Paris, for the purpose of informing the Ministers respecting the common interests of France and the Patriots; to explain the true state of circumstances in detail; to indicate by what steps, by what kind of succours, the Cabinet of Versailles might contribute to the success of the Republican cause; answer objections, dissipate doubts, &c.: all things which could be but imperfectly accomplished by writing, at least to avoid details immeasurably voluminous, and which there was not then time to read, but which might be discussed with infinitely more facility by conversation.

His character pliant and ductile, his genius and his peculiar species of wit and eloquence succeeded perfectly at Versailles; in that country where the talent of pleasing was the first of all possible qualifications. M. de Calonne, in particular,

ticular, was seduced and infatuated; and did not trouble himself with ascertaining whether this dazzling surface covered a foundation of real merit, and a real spirit of patriotism. It may easily be conceived, that the Rhingrave de Salm, in the midst of his success, did not forget his personal interests. A General in the service of the City of Utrecht, but only a Colonel in that of the Province of Holland; he had the address to prevail with the French Minister to confer on him the rank of Field-marshal. He did more: he induced M. de Calonne to render this honour more substantial, by attaching to it an annuity for life of forty thousand francs, without the smallest difficulty. It is easily to be conceived, that, after this favour, he had reflected on the risk that this pension might in the sequel be annihilated, with the same facility it was obtained, in consequence of the deplorable state of the French finances; and in order to protect it from all hazards, he had requested the principal instead of the income, to which M. de Calonne had as readily agreed; so that by producing the patent of his pension, he had obtained a sum of four hundred thousand francs. As soon as the affairs of the Republican party began to wear a certain degree of incertitude, from their extreme complexity, it has been seen  
what

what was the opinion on the interference of France as a mediatrix between the Provinces. This mediation did not, by any means, accord with the calculations of the Rhingrave, who soon perceived that his game was entirely at an end, the moment France should be able to terminate the dissensions on which he founded his elevation; hence he endeavoured, by every means in his power, to remove it; and as nothing could be concluded on but by the determination of the towns, and more especially of Amsterdam, he dispatched his emissaries thither in order to prejudice the people against every species of mediation, and to induce them rather to resort to the most violent measures, in the persuasion that one of their first steps would be to assemble the free corps of the whole Province, and to declare him Generalissimo of their whole armed force; a kind of military dictatorship which must have placed all the power and all the treasure of Holland at his disposal. These gigantic plans did not escape the penetration of the enlightened Republicans, who could no longer entertain a doubt that he attended more to his personal advantage than to that of the party.

On the other hand, from the time he had been entrusted with the defence of Utrecht, he  
had

had never neglected the means of extricating himself from the difficulty, in case the Stadtholderian party should decidedly acquire the superiority. The vicinity of the enemies troops afforded him a great many opportunities to settle and prosecute an intrigue with the Court of Nimeguen; and it is known that he had several conferences with the Count de Callemberg, a Saxon, highly esteemed in the Stadtholderian family. Some expressions have even been cited which he addressed to Count Callemberg, on quitting him, after one of these interviews: "Believe, besides," said he, "that I am not so much prejudiced in favour of the lemon, but I have also a considerable reliance for the orange." We do not guarantee this phrase, which carries its own commentary along with it. These conferences, however, were not productive of any result, doubtless from each of the parties being too cunning; mutual distrust, perhaps well founded on both sides, did not permit them to agree on terms. If to these facts we add, that the Rhingrave had opposed the Sovereign Committee of Woerden, it will easily be conceived how deservedly he had forfeited the confidence of the leaders of the party. He was, however, permitted to remain at Utrecht, from the apprehension

I

hension

hension, that if the command was withdrawn from him, he would immediately pass over to the enemy's side, followed by his legion, which was at that time the flower of the troops attached to the Republican party.

Affairs, as we have seen, were then in a very critical state; the Patriots, however, still expected their safety from France, and were not entirely discouraged. But the intelligence on the 16th was dreadful. Before seven o'clock in the morning the leaders were informed, that the Prussians had at length entered on the territory of the Republic; and were advancing towards the Province of Holland, in three columns; the first directing its march towards Naarden, the second towards Amersfort, and the third towards Gorcum; that this last was already at Tiel on the Waal; that the inundations on that side had not succeeded according to expectation, though it had rained for several days, the rain having been neither long nor abundant enough to restore the level of the Leck to the height that the preceding drought had decreased; that there was not the smallest probability of being able to defend Gorcum; and that then nothing could prevent the enemy from reaching the Hague in the course of three days. They learnt also, at the same instant, that

that France was at length determined to send them succours as soon as the King should receive a formal invitation on that head from the States of Holland. This so tardy intelligence by no means counterbalanced the imminent misfortunes which began to threaten the Republic.

The principal Patriots, on the arrival of these distressful tidings, were assembled at the house of M. Gislæer. Here they very calmly deliberated on the danger of their situation, and on the conduct which it was immediately indispensable for them to pursue. Hope was not entirely extinguished, since France had announced, that she would undertake the defence of the Province of Holland. There remained no question but to maintain themselves in some strong place, in order to give time for the French troops to arrive; and as no place could more certainly accomplish this object than the city of Amsterdam, they took the resolution of quitting that very day the city of the Hague, in order to unite afterwards at Amsterdam. This resolution was not characteristic of pusillanimity. It was extremely probable, that shortly some furious commotion would be raised; and that the populace, encouraged by the approach of the Prussians,  
and

and irritated by the presence of the Republican leaders, had they remained; would indubitably have sacrificed them in the first moments of their rage. Would they not then, and with reason, have been accused of great imprudence, if, for the purpose of displaying a vain and ostentatious courage, they had neglected to preserve themselves for the public welfare?

The States of Holland were immediately assembled; no official mention was made of the news of the day; and the only interesting resolution which passed during this sitting was that of requiring from France, in consequence of the alliance, succours against the Prussian invasion; which resolution was on the same day dispatched to Versailles. But immediately after the assembly the three Pensionaries withdrew, and quitted the Hague by different routes.

The news each hour became worse; on the day even of the departure of the Patriots, the first intelligence was received of the evacuation of Utrecht. As soon as there was a certainty in the city of the entry of the Prussians on the territory of the Republic, and the march of a column towards Amersfort, the Rhingrave de Salm called a great council of war, in order to deliberate on the measures necessary to be taken. He opened it by a speech, in which  
he

he undertook to demonstrate that the place was incapable of sustaining a siege, and concluded for its immediate evacuation. The Chevalier de Bellonet, whose great military talents were crowned by uncommon modesty, agreed that the city was undoubtedly not impregnable; but he represented, with moderation, that he thought it was capable of a defence of several weeks. The Rhingrave, to whom this opinion was by no means agreeable, asserted that there was a want of stores and provisions, and that it was impossible to procure them from Holland. If the fact were really so, the Rhingrave had been very culpable in neglecting to provide with the necessary articles a place confided to his care, which had been so long threatened; and if it were only a pretext, what are we to think of the courage, the talents, or the probity of a Commandant, who first broached such an opinion? Be this as it may, his assertion imposed silence on the Council; the evacuation was resolved on, and executed in the greatest disorder. There were left a fine and numerous artillery, very imperfectly spiked, and a great store of powder. The corps who formed the garrison fell back; some on Nievesluys, others on Woerden, or some other place of the cordon, all with a design

design of definitively throwing themselves into Amsterdam. The Rhingrave de Salm consulted his own personal safety, and forgot the public good. He disappeared in a moment, and so well concealed his route, that during the remainder of the Revolution it was never known what became of him.

Gorcum, deprived of the benefit of the inundation, its natural strength, could not hold out, and was compelled to surrender on the 17th, on the first bomb that was fired. M. de Capellen, the brother of the Baron de Capellen de March, whom we have more than once mentioned in the course of this work, commanding the place, with a very weak garrison, was made a prisoner of war, and the Stadtholderian hatred treated him so barbarously, that he died in a few weeks. The roadway was at that time open as far as the Hague, without any possibility of stopping the enemy. The news arrived in this city in the night between the 17th and 18th; and as soon as the populace were informed of it, they exhibited symptoms of a very alarming fermentation. In the morning there were very numerous crowds assembling on every side; and dividing themselves into groupes of forty or fifty, ran through the streets of the city covered with orange-coloured ribbands, and insulted the

the passengers who had not a similar emblem, and that under the eyes of the piquet of the garrison, who suffered them to do it quietly. This was the prelude; and in the evening the commotion assumed an appearance truly alarming. It is impossible to conceive the outrageous fury of this populace against all who were either directly or indirectly connected with the patriotic party. Their houses were pillaged or destroyed; themselves, when they were so imprudent as to appear, were either cruelly ill-treated, massacred, or thrown into the canals. The *Hotel de France* could not have escaped total destruction, if the *Chargé d'Affaires* had not in time required the Government to grant him a guard adequate to the protection of his person and his house from all insult. This precaution saved the hotel; but a furious populace were assembled every evening, and remained all night under his windows, venting the howls of wild beasts, uttering imprecations against France, and curses against the piquet, which would not abandon the house to their fury. The consternation throughout the province was general; all the towns, either already subdued, or disposed to submit, were more or less delivered up to pillage and massacre: it was,

was, in a word, a scene of horror and desolation.

The Assembly of Amersfort wrote to these very States-General a violent letter against the Province of Holland, on the subject of the orders given to General Van-Ryffel, with a threat of also taking measures on their side, if the orders were not revoked, and the General brought to trial. The officers dismissed by the States of Holland also addressed the States-General, and claimed protection. All was well received, all was referred to report, or to a direct deliberation. The States General applauded the conduct of the malecontent officers; they made a motion to declare even that they deserved an indemnity. A discussion took place. Gueldres, Over-Yffel, and Amersfort consented. Friesland and Groningen took the matter *ad referendum*. Of two deputies of Zealand, who were present, the one was for and the other against it, and the President concluded, without hesitation, in favour of the motion. Next day, on the *resumption*\*, a third

\* By the then Constitution, a resolution, after being debated and decreed, required, in order to give it the force of a law, to be submitted to a second deliberation; and a fresh debate, in which the deputies *resumed* what had been already said, with the addition of what further they had to

third deputy from Zealand arrived, disapproved of the conduct of his colleague, who had voted for the motion, and joined the other, to have the question taken *ad referendum*. The deputation of Over-Yssel announced that they had just received from their constituents an express order likewise to have it taken *ad referendum*. These four provinces required an *ad referendum*. Only Gueldres and Amersfort persevered in their first opinion; nevertheless the President concluded, as he had the day before, in favour of the motion, with a minority of two to four.

A resolution passed by a minority, without the smallest scruple, and without regard to decency, was, till then, an unexampled circumstance in the history of the Republic, and for that reason alone we think it necessary to be mentioned; and the rather, in order to shew how much this assembly of the States-General, so majestic, so august in the flourishing epochs of the Republic, had fallen from its ancient dignity; and how, being deprived of the assistance of the Province of Holland, they volunta-

ry on it. This second examination was denominated the *resumption*; and when a resolution had passed at the *resumption*, it was no longer possible to appear against it.

rily

rily conspired in some degree against Liberty, and in favour of Despotism, guided only by the sole fanaticism of Gueldres: that is to say, of a very small number of aristocratic regents; it was become a focus of hateful passions, whence the public good could never more be promoted, and afterwards exhibited only scenes of disorder and confusion, till the period when Dutch Liberty, having received its death-blow, the will of the States-General, as well as of the Provincial States, was lost, and swallowed up under the domination of an individual.

Under these circumstances, William published a manifesto, the violence of which completed the public rage and indignation against him in the Province of Holland. It was the same false and insidious statement, supported by the most injurious expressions against the citizens best known for their virtues and patriotism; the affectation of making his cause appear to be sustained by the most judicious and numerous party of the nation; whereas, in strict truth, it had no defenders, except a very few aristocrats, and the populace of the towns, who were not even every where attached to him. The extraordinary avowal he had recently made of great efforts to re-establish him in his full authority, that his partisans had

pushed this matter very far, and that he considered himself on the point of succeeding, whilst the revolutions of Amsterdam and Rotterdam had rendered abortive his designs, and destroyed his hopes. Bitter complaints of these revolutions, of the measures taken in the affair of Utrecht by the patriotic citizens, on whom injurious epithets were not spared; a declaration, the purport of which was, that he considered these citizens as tyrants and enemies, against whom he was not afraid to shew himself ready to put in motion every means he might find necessary to destroy these fatal innovations, which tended only to render inevitable the total ruin of the Republic; adding, that for this purpose, he would immediately second the good dispositions of Gueldres and Utrecht; lastly, an exhortation to all to enter into his views, with the assurance, that if they were willing to restore to him the command of the Hague, to reinstate him in his functions of Captain-General, to annul all the resolutions adopted against him, he would consent to return to the Hague, where he would consult on the means of re-establishing general tranquillity.

The first idea which occurs to the mind, is to enquire for what purpose this manifesto was published,

published, and what effect the Prince could promise himself from it? The following is the answer to that question.

Sir James Harris had made a journey to Nimeguen, whilst the Stadtholderian Court had resolved on a plan of measures, of which this manifesto made a part. It was to appear in the States, as in fact it did, on the 30th of May. On the 31st it was to be made known at Amsterdam, and on the 1st of June, there was to be excited a violent commotion in that city to support it. Collateral measures had been taken at the Hague, where were seen at the same time the people running in crowds to a tavern in the city, in order to sign a requisition in favour of the Stadtholder, which was to be presented to the States. It was also remarked, that Sir James Harris, who had quitted Nimeguen, to prevent, undoubtedly, the suspicion of having framed this plot, returned exactly on the 1st of June, although he had announced his return for a later day. This coincidence was extremely remarkable, and appeared clearly to indicate, that this Minister, after having prepared events, had quitted the scene, to re-appear at the catastrophe.

All the machination recoiled on himself. The Stadtholderian mob at Amsterdam, with-

out waiting the time that had been indicated to it, began on the 30th of May to insult the Patriots in the streets, and soon after a terrible explosion took place. But the patriotic mob, which was very numerous at Amsterdam, vigorously attacked and repulsed the Stadtholderians, who retreated to the quarter of the city called the *Cattemburg*. This is the abode of sailors, workmen belonging to the Admiralty, &c. and was the great focus of the insurrection. The Stadtholderians drew up the only bridge which formed the communication with the city, and prepared to defend it. In an instant the ropes that held the bridge suspended were cut; it fell down, and the passage was forced. Other Patriots threw themselves into some barges, and descending the canal, proceeded to attack the *Cattemburg* on the other side; so that the Stadtholderians seeing themselves surrounded, and entirely routed, fled in all directions, and retired to their homes. But the patriotic populace being once set in motion, it was extremely difficult to restrain them.

During this period of trouble and disorder, it was natural to the Dutch populace of both sides, when once in action, to abandon themselves to disorders and excesses of every sort. Woe to those

those of their enemies who fell into their hands! they were, for the most part, thrown, without pity, into the canals; and when they did not meet them personally, they attacked their houses. Then did that spirit of preservation, which so particularly and universally characterizes the Dutch people, disappear, and give way to a spirit of destruction, that spared or respected nothing. They turned no article to their advantage; they destroyed solely for the sake of destruction, and to deprive an enemy of his accustomed enjoyments. From this known character, there cannot be a doubt, that if the Patriotic mob at Amsterdam had been left to themselves, they would have made terrible reprisals for all the ills they had to dread from the Stadtholderians, had they been the strongest. Accordingly, the Burghers adopted wise and well concerted measures, to prevent excess. Being persuaded that the first fury of the people would lead them to the house of M. Dedel, one of the dismissed Burgomasters, who had been extremely odious to them, they flew to his defence, and preserved him from every injury; but the succours were not sufficiently quick to save, in like manner, the houses of M. Rendorp and M. Beels, members of the old Regency. The mob, who ran thither in great

s 4

crowds,

crowds, burst in, and, in a few minutes, all the furniture and valuable effects were broken, destroyed, and thrown into the canal, without any individual thinking of keeping a single article for his own use.

To these two houses was confined the havoc of this day, which, but for the prudent precautions of the Burghers, threatened to become universal. Some prisoners were apprehended at the Cattemburg, and some houses were searched. The prisoners made a confession; and papers found in the houses completely developed the secret of the Stadtholderian plan, as it has been already explained. Lastly, stores of powder, balls, and arms, sent after the explosion, and seized; the depositions of an armourer, who had been employed to furnish six hundred muskets, &c.—all evinced the danger which Amsterdam, and consequently the whole Province of Holland, had just escaped.

Thus, of all this preparation, concerted with such difficulty, and calculated on so uncertain elements, there alone remained the Prince's manifesto, the offensive violence of which could only serve to render parties more and more irreconcilable, and engender extravagant resolutions.

It

It has been seen, that after the attack of the three small towns of Gueldres, Elburg and Hattem, the States of Holland had suspended the Prince from his functions of Captain-general. After his enterprise against Utrecht, the seventy-two assessments, into which the free corps belonging to the States of Holland had been distributed, joined in presenting to the States a remonstrance, insisting that William V. should be suspended from his functions of Stadtholder and Admiral-general, and deprived of the emoluments attached to these offices. This remonstrance had just been taken *ad referendum*; and whilst it was in circulation in the towns; whilst it was become the subject of deliberation of the Regencies; whilst it universally engaged all private conversations; whilst it excited, in every mind, an effervescence more or less ardent; this very moment the Prince made choice of to publish a manifesto, which alone was sufficient to awaken all the passions, if they had been perfectly asleep. The remonstrance would infallibly have been received by the States of Holland, and converted into a resolution, by a very great majority; and all that could have been obtained by the leaders, who saw, with much regret, the hopes of peace daily more distant, would have been, that the

States might give to this resolution only the simple character of a provisional resolution, which would, at least, still leave one avenue open to reconciliation, when the people's minds, less exasperated, had shewn less reluctance to the reconcilment of parties. But circumstances, which shortly became changed in a way more serious than ever, diverted the public attention from this remonstrance, and prevented its being again brought forward in the Assembly of the States.

Whilst Holland had resolved to form a *cordon* of troops on her frontier, towards Utrecht, she had organized, at Woerden, a military commission, of which General Van-Ryffel, Commander of the *cordon*, was President. It corresponded with a commission of *defence*, formed at the Hague, to which it transmitted all the details of military business, and received from it all the resolutions and orders either of the States of Holland, or the Council Committee. These two commissions might be sufficient for the current detail of ordinary affairs; but, since the Prince had attempted an invasion of Utrecht, since the States-General had been accustomed to counteract all the measures of the Province of Holland, by resolutions which led the regiments to disobedience, and granted protection

protection to refractory officers; and, particularly, since the Prince's manifesto gave reason to fear sudden and unforeseen enterprises, which could not be stopped but by quick and rapid movements; the insufficiency was felt of a commission obliged to render an account of every occurrence to another commission, and to wait its orders, in all cases, where its authority was too confined, and which, being obliged to deliberate when it ought to act, let opportunities escape, lost time that was precious, and might eminently endanger the public interest. There was wanting, therefore, a spring, which might actuate and accelerate all its necessary operations. On the other hand, the commission at the Hague, consisting of five members chosen from among the leaders of the Republican party, found themselves overwhelmed with details. Being religiously attached to forms, ill according, perhaps, to great resolutions, from their spirit of moderation; even prescribing to themselves, also, a rule to hear every person, in order that they might not be accused of wishing to govern exclusively; they could not, although leading the most laborious life, follow all the business and its details with the promptitude necessary, and still they thought themselves limited in many points. Hence resulted,

on

on several occasions, a sort of inactivity, the danger of which was felt by the nation, and which, in fact, might be attended with vexatious consequences.

The city of Amsterdam, more interested than any other in the success of the Republican cause, and anxious to remedy this evil, made a proposition to the States, on the 7th of June, of establishing a commission, independent of those of the Hague and Woerden, which should consist of five members at most, on whom should be conferred an unlimited power of adopting such measures as they should consider necessary for the safety of the Republic, in order to divert any attack and hostile invasion. They desired that, for this effect, the proposed commission should be authorized to employ all persons it might think necessary; to recompense the officers who should distinguish themselves; to employ the armed corps of citizens; to dispose of the national treasure; to reside in the *cordon* or its neighbourhood, or even to chuse the place of its residence; to correspond and concert with the commission at the Hague, without, however, being bound to communicate to the latter its operations, of which it was to be mistress, and not to be obliged to account for them, till after their execution; and to comprise

comprise the whole in one word, in the language of the States, to qualify it *cum plena*. It was exactly the power of the ancient Dictators which was intended to be thus conferred.

This proposition was acceded to without hesitation, and the election of the members of the commission immediately took place. It is unnecessary to say, that it fell on men as much distinguished for their Republican virtues as for their ability. Their names deserve to be recorded. They were, for the city of Haerlem, *M. Cammerlingen*; for that of Leyden, *M. Bos*; for Amsterdam, *M. De Witt*\*; for Gouda, *M. Toulon*; and for Alkmaer, *M. Van-Foreest*. This commission immediately entered on business.

It was an excellent idea, thus to concentrate the power in circumstances so tempestuous, and against an enemy so active; but, whilst among the ancient Romans, the Dictatorship annihilated every other authority, the commission, just established by the States of Holland, was absolutely without power against the most

\* A descendent of the celebrated and unfortunate De Witts, who were massacred at the Hague, under William III. The love of Liberty is hereditary in his family. He is now at Paris.

dangerous

dangerous of all, the States-General, whom the nature of their institution itself placed in entire independence of the particular States of each Province.

Never had their Assembly demonstrated so inveterate an animosity against Holland; never had they adopted resolutions so hostile against that Province. They had just formed one, among others, to retain, in their stations, the refractory officers, and restore them to their duty; to suspend those who had evinced their fidelity to the States of Holland; to prohibit regiments, in general, from allowing themselves to be disarmed, by any other orders than those of the States-General, &c. These resolutions were, doubtless, unreasonable; they were, besides, very inefficient, since it was Holland that paid them, and not the States-General; and besides, the States of Holland did not fail to give, from that very day, orders precisely contrary, which restored matters to their former situation. This perpetual clashing of resolutions against resolutions was scarcely becoming the dignity of a Sovereign Assembly: however, the States-General drew some advantage from it; for the troops, being thus continually placed between contradictory resolutions, began, insensibly, to examine the orders that were sent them,

them, to make themselves, in some measure, judges between the two authorities, and take no advice but their own. This situation might easily become dangerous, and lead directly to disobedience and insurrection.

It was then clearly perceived, but much too late, that the Republicans had not paid sufficient attention to the increase of their influence on the determinations of the States-General. The leaders of the Patriotic party were diverted from this point, by the idea of the wealth and power of the Province of Holland. They were too easily persuaded, that, without her support, the States-General, left without consistency and without power, would be always obliged to revert to her; and they had not calculated how far the spirit of hatred and revenge would furnish them with resources against her, to relieve them from obstacles incessantly renewing, and shackle her procedure at every step she might take towards the re-establishment of Liberty.

There was a time when it was possible for Holland, and, perhaps, without much difficulty, to have secured a majority in the States-General. She had on her side Groningen and Over-Yssel. She only required one more vote, and Friesland presented to her more facility than any other Province, because it was disposed in  
favour

favour of France, both by inclination and interest, and had, on all occasions, very openly opposed the Stadtholder and his pretensions.

But Friesland had a constitution altogether peculiar to itself, which placed the Government in the hands of a small number of nobles, and formed an hereditary aristocracy, to which all those who participated the authority were excessively attached. At the same time, this Province contained a very great number of Patriots among the citizens, and in the universities; and this occasioned the solicitude of the Regents. Accordingly, they had taken care to draw towards them the regiments of the assessment, as a means of defence in case force or example should excite disturbances in their Province. The Friesland Regents would then have concurred, willingly, with those of Holland, to vote together in the States-General, had they been able to obtain from the latter a guarantee, which should secure to them the quiet enjoyment of their power; but for this the Hollanders would not be answerable. They might, however, have offered, especially at the beginning of the troubles, some medium that would have facilitated the accommodation, if the affair had been pursued with greater activity. But when the Frieslanders perceived, that the Patriots,

Patriots, in attacking the abusive privileges of the Stadtholderate, made no less formidable attacks on the Aristocracy, and particularly Family Aristocracy; when they saw that the citizens deposed some magistrates, and that the Patriots of Holland were connected in correspondence with those of Friesland, they dreaded that the storm might also burst on their heads, and thought of defending themselves. Thenceforth they decidedly separated their cause from that of Holland, and after that time voted constantly against her in the States-General.

It was necessary, therefore, to discover, in another quarter, the means of destroying that majority in the States-General, which was daily producing resolutions so dangerous. Circumstances were becoming more and more critical; and on the 10th of June, the States-General had, on the proposition of Amersfort, decreed the suspension of General Van-Ryffel, prohibiting him from exercising any command over the troops, under pain of being broke, and ordering the officers to refuse obedience to him. At the same time, they issued other orders, tending directly to exonerate the troops from the obligation of their oath to the States of Holland, and protect them in their disobedience to the orders of that Province. These measures were

not without effect; and the regiment of Stuart, quartered in the little town of *Oudewater*, misled by an officer, dismissed on account of disobedience, and who had introduced himself into the town by means of a disguise, quitted their assessment, and passing the *Leck*, marched towards *Kuylenburg*, in *Gueldres*. It is true, that the officers of this regiment, and a great majority of non-commissioned officers, had remained faithful: several soldiers even, when they became cool, acknowledged their error, and returned to their assessment; whilst some free corps, of different towns, ran to supply the vacancies: but it is no less true, that the example of defection was given, which might introduce universal disorder among the troops.

It was, at first, proposed to form new States in the Province of *Utrecht*, by assembling some Patriotic members of the Nobility and Clergy, who, in truth, formed but the minority of these two orders; but as they were supported by the majority of the towns, and particularly by *Utrecht*, alone more powerful than all the rest of the Province together, these States exhibited no more irregularities than those of *Amersfort*, and did not suffer the same ridicule. The Regents of *Amersfort* were convoked thither;

ther; but they did not attend, notwithstanding the passports that were sent them.

It had been intended to send, from these new States, a deputation to the States-General, who, being in opposition to those of Amersfort, would have rendered nugatory the vote of the States of Utrecht. The States-General, being reduced to six votes, three of which were on the one side, and three on the other, there was a complete division, which no longer allowed them to form a single resolution, and, in fact, rendered them absolutely null.

Will it be said, that they would have refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the new States of Utrecht, because the majority of the orders of the Nobles and Clergy was not comprised in them? The same reason might also be set up as an objection to the States of Amersfort, since these were deficient in four towns out of five; and the fifth too, the place of their residence, appeared on their side, only because their presence, and that of the troops, did not allow a free exercise of its will.

This plan would have essentially served the cause of the Patriots, if it could have been executed a fortnight before. But the resolution of the 10th of June, of which we have just

spoken, was of such a nature, that it could not be maintained; it was, therefore, absolutely necessary to abrogate it by a contrary resolution: this was supposing a majority, which could not be obtained, if the States should, in fact, fall into a nullity.

Thus, in place of destroying the vote of Amersfort by that of Utrecht, the States of Utrecht contented themselves with the idea of consolidating the two deputations into one, in such a manner, however, that that of Utrecht should be more numerous than that of Amersfort, in order that the vote thence resulting might give the majority to the side of Holland. This arrangement was soon put in execution. Amersfort sent two deputies to the States-General; Utrecht sent three, who arrived at the Assembly on the 14th of June. Their admission being put into deliberation, Gueldres and Zealand refused it; Groningen voted to take it *ad referendum*; Holland, Over-Yffel, and Friesland were for the admission. M Van-Berkel employed, in this case, the same argument of which he had availed himself with the States of Holland, for the admission of the new deputation from Rotterdam, namely, that the only business of the States-General was, to ascertain if the letters of credence of the new deputies

deputies were regular or not, the rest concerning only the Province of Utrecht, and not the Generality. The Gueldres deputies declared that they would not deliberate with these: M. Van-Berkel answered, that they might retire, if they thought fit, and that the deliberations would proceed without them. They remained. The President let fall the hammer, and the affair terminated.

Next day the admission of the new Deputies, after much debate and a number of difficulties, was confirmed, by a majority of four Provinces, against Gueldres and Zealand. Holland then, at length, attained a majority in the States-General. She availed herself of her superiority the same day, by again bringing into discussion all the violent resolutions which had been adopted on the 10th. They were abrogated, without exception, by the same majority, and an order of the State Council immediately decreed, to give notice to General Van-Ryffel, and all the commanders and chief officers of regiments.

Could things have remained in this situation, the return to general tranquillity would have been effected with the greatest rapidity; but the advantage was of no long duration. The Provinces adverse to Holland, terrified at the success she had just obtained over the States-

General, attempted every thing, to retain the majority on their side.

Amersfort thought of strengthening her deputation by three additional members, in order to obtain the superiority over that of Utrecht. This was foreseen, and Utrecht resolved to strengthen her's by four additional deputies, in order to preserve that superiority, which then came to be in the *ratio* of seven to five. They were both regular; but in the interval Friesland had severely censured her deputies, for their vote in favour of Holland, and given them instructions so precise that they could not evade them; and when the new deputies on both sides presented themselves, those of Amersfort were received without difficulty, and those of Utrecht rejected.

This proceeding of the States-General must undoubtedly appear the height of inconsistency and irregularity. After they had admitted the former deputation of Utrecht, in concurrence with that of Amersfort, either the extraordinary deputation of Utrecht ought to have been admitted, as well as that of Amersfort, or both of them should have been rejected; or, lastly, if that of Utrecht alone was rejected, its ordinary deputation ought also to have been refused, whilst they cast off the second, and retained

retained the first. We shall leave to the reader the trouble of appreciating this conduct.

But the great injury to Holland was this : The Council of State, after having refused to concur in the violent resolutions of the 10th of June, had, nevertheless, expedited the orders necessary in consequence of these resolutions. They were solemnly abrogated on the 14th, by a majority of five to two ; and the same Council refused to expedite the orders directed by this last resolution. A discussion took place on the manner in which it ought to be executed ; it was referred to a committee ; the opportunity was lost, and it remained absolutely ineffectual.

The result was, that desertion became considerable among the troops of the cordon, which was soon abandoned by the watermen of Salm, the regiments of Waldeck, and a part of the regiments of Hesse, Phillipstal, Suyart, and Hardenbroek. They would undoubtedly have remained at their posts, had the Council of State fulfilled its duty, by executing the orders of the States-General.

This intelligence, instead of appeasing the minds of the people, on the contrary, inflamed them with fresh enthusiasm. The nation felt that they ought to intrust to themselves alone the care of their own defence, and

undertook to supply the defection of the troops by their free corps and armed citizens. They recollected with pleasure the unexampled efforts they had formerly made against Philip II. and the success they then obtained. Persuaded that the same energy would again produce the same effect, they sent from every quarter corps, more or less numerous, towards the line of the *cordon*. The canals were covered with transport-barges, and it was calculated that North-Holland alone furnished near four thousand men. These corps had as military an organization as it had been possible to give them: they were divided into companies, with officers and non-commissioned officers; and both officers and soldiers were attached to the service by a considerable pay, for which the Province, and particularly Amsterdam and Rotterdam, expended their treasures.

On the side of Amersfort the people were no longer perfectly quiet. English gold had, in fact, had more effect over the Dutch troops belonging to the *cordon* than the resolutions of the States-General; but as the desertion which ensued was the work of corruption, for this very reason the regiments which deserted inspired no confidence, while that which took place among the Stadholderians, and which carried them

them towards Utrecht, became truly advantageous to that city, because this desertion was voluntary, and not purchased. It was rendered considerable merely by the effect of a proclamation of the new States of Utrecht, in which they invited the troops of the assentment of the Province to return to their true and lawful Sovereign.

The Regents of Amersfort were not unanimous in their opinions. The Stadtholder had been called to that city by order of the Clergy, and against the inclinations of the Equestrian Order, all the members of which, except M. Perponches and Lord Athlone, had wished to separate their cause from that of the Prince. Thus, while William and his adherents were occupied only with plans of attack and violence, the Nobles obstinately resolved to confine themselves to the mere defensive, and hitherto their opinion had prevailed. During this time Utrecht had acquired new defenders, and its garrison was increased to near seven thousand men, which was more than sufficient against the Stadtholderian forces. The Supreme Commission, recently constituted by the States of Holland, displayed its powers in ordering new levies, encouraging those officers who remained faithful by extraordinary gratifications

cations, and ameliorating the lot of the soldier by an augmentation of pay \*; employing, in a word, every means to furnish the Province with an army on which it could depend.

Lastly, Gueldres itself was not exempt from all inquietude. Over-Yffel had assembled, at Deventer, a body of three thousand troops, which was speedily to be augmented by fifteen hundred men from the country of Drente. The command of these had been intrusted to the Chevalier Ternant, a French officer of uncommon merit, who had fought with distinguished reputation in America. This body had made itself master of the fort of Ommerfkans, which contained an ample magazine of ammunition and stores of every sort, except muskets, of which there were only found three hundred; but Amsterdam had, from her arsenal, supplied what was wanting to make up the deficiency. The vicinity of this force inspired the States of Gueldres with fear, which was still increased by that of seeing turned against them, on the first favourable opportunity, the Holland regiments, to whom they had refused permission to quit Gueldres, in order to march

\* The officers received a whole year's pay, merely as a gratification. The soldiers' pay was increased 24 French sous (near one shilling sterling) a week.

into the country of the Generality, as the States of Holland had required.

Such was the state of things towards the end of June. This perpetual conflict of opposite passions, opinions, and pretensions, had produced a degree of complication, which, for a long time, gave no farther hopes of an end of the troubles, by a negotiation between the leaders of the different parties; for these parties became multiplied. They were reckoned:

1. The Stadtholderians, properly so called, who wished for the Stadtholderate, such as it was; that is to say, with the laws, the right of patents, &c. in a word, will all its abuses. This was the party of the Court, the majority of the States of Gueldres, the Regency of Amersfort, the States-General, the Nobles of Holland, &c.

2. A party of Aristocrates, spread through the old Regencies of towns, who would willingly have consented to all the resolutions proposed against the Stadtholderian authority, provided their own had been respected; who in that case would have gained as much as they would lose in the other. In this party were reckoned the States of Friesland, a number of the old Regencies of Amsterdam, and patrician families, accustomed to transmit to their descendants

descendants the offices which remained thus concentrated in a certain number of houses.

3. The original Patriots, at the head of whom were M. M. Van-Berkel, of Amsterdam; Gillaer, of Dort; Zeeberg, of Harlem. These were very desirous to preserve the Stadtholderate; but they wished to abolish all the abuses, without distinction. They were no better disposed to temporize with family aristocracy. Would it be worth while, in fact, to break the rod of Stadtholderian despotism, in order to fall under that of the Aristocracy, still more disgusting? Perhaps the Patriots discovered too much of their design against the Aristocracy, which alienated the latter from them, as soon as they suspected the fate intended for them; whereas they might have made use of them with a decided advantage, to set bounds to the Stadtholderian authority; and afterwards, when this first part of the plan was accomplished and consolidated, have returned against the same Aristocracy, whose destruction would then have been much less difficult.

4. Lastly, The changes effected in the Regencies of towns, by the institution of representatives elected by these towns, by armed citizens, and by free corps, had given birth to a  
fourth

fourth party, if not the most powerful, at least the most troublesome of all. This was entirely a democratic party, who wished the total destruction of the Stadtholderate, as well as of every sort of Aristocracy, which they resolved to accomplish in all the provinces at once. This was certainly the straightest and shortest road towards true Liberty. The principle was good, and perfectly conformable to the Rights of Man ; and, had it been practicable, the Patriots would readily have adopted it, particularly after the Stadtholder had furnished terrible weapons against himself, by his insulting declarations, his violent proceedings, and his disobedience, or rather his treason, in the old affair of Breft. But this popular party was not aware that the Stadtholder was supported by all the force of England and Prussia ; that Zealand, Gueldres, and Friesland were open to these powers ; that Over-Yffel, Groningen, and even Utrecht, could oppose but a momentary resistance ; that Holland, betrayed by the Aristocrates, could not, with all its natural means of defence, long hold out against two formidable Powers, who could attack it in both extremities at once ; that there was then no other succour to be expected but from France, and it could hardly be supposed that she would run the risk  
of

of inflaming all Europe, by engaging in a war, which had no other object but the expulsion of a Stadtholder from the Province of Holland.

This party, however, rendered the proceedings of the authorities then much more complicated than they had before been. Popular societies were established in the principal towns. Their orators, mounted on benches or tables, inflamed minds already too much heated. In these assemblies the members decided on all the operations of Government; they rendered justice to the rectitude and purity of intention of the three principal leaders; but they greatly blamed the facility with which they attended to all the proposals of accommodation coming either from Amersfort, or even from Gueldres: this facility they denominated weakness, and accused them of having ruined the public welfare by too much moderation. These reproaches were made by deputations, who did not always allow the degree of regard due to respectable Republicans, who had first given the signal of Liberty, who had rendered eminent services to the country, who sacrificed their rest and their daily business; and who, on a supposition of a return to the former order of things, would remain as victims already devoted to Stadtholderian vengeance. These deputations  
were

were frequently renewed, and generally for the purpose of censure, or of suggesting new ideas, which were frequently incompatible with the nature of circumstances. The leaders heard every thing with extreme patience; but they became discouraged, and allowed the helm of affairs insensibly to escape from their hands.

The authorities in the towns were necessarily relaxed, and the Regencies did not dare to decide a new question, without being previously assured of the approbation of the body of representatives of their town. It is true, that this was likewise a certain means of knowing perfectly the national will; but it was a no less certain means of retarding exertions at a moment when they might require the greatest dispatch. This inconvenience was in the sequel felt in a very disagreeable manner.

Amidst this clashing of parties, and of contradictory opinions, and the strange complication resulting, no hope remained of seeing the chaos dispelled otherwise than by the intervention of a foreign power; which being inaccessible to private passions, and able, with the greatest coolness, to examine mutual pretensions, might conciliate all parties, and restore peace and union in the Republic. France being,

ing, from her alliance, interested in the return of tranquillity, authorized her Ambassador to insinuate to the heads of the Republican party, that she would willingly undertake the office of Mediatrix between the different parties, whenever the Republic should, by its organ, the States-General, think proper to request her interposition.

This was the only way of attaining a happy termination. France, who by no means wished to give any cause of complaint to the Court of Berlin, proposed to take no step without its consent; and, when the two powers were agreed, no resistance could be attempted on the part of the Republic; but it rested with the States of Holland to present to the States-General this proposition, which, from its importance, could not be discussed by the States of Holland themselves, except on the express requisition of the most considerable city in the Province, Amsterdam. But its Pensionary, M. Van Berkel, was not sufficiently master of the public opinion, to venture to make a new conciliatory proposition without particular orders from the Regency of Amsterdam. He was afraid, and with too much reason, of inciting a terrible storm against himself amongst the popular Societies, who, without consulting their means,

now

now adopted only intemperate measures. It was therefore necessary for him to induce the Regency to give him the most express orders on this point. But, when this new plan was communicated to the Regents, they did not dare to take the execution of it on themselves, without previously having the opinion and approbation of the body of representatives of the city.

Fortunately that body contained a sufficient number of wise and highly enlightened citizens, who assembled as soon as they knew of the business. It was considered in every point of view, and discussed with very uncommon sagacity. They weighed all the objections to which it could give place; and it was not till after they had conquered them by satisfactory answers, that they determined to present to the Council of Regency an address, praying it, in the name of the Citizens, to direct the Deputy of the city to present to the States of Holland a proposition, tending to request the mediation of the King of France, in order to put an end to the troubles of the Republic.

The Council only waited the will of the citizens, to give the necessary instructions to the Deputation from Amsterdam at the Hague. They were dispatched immediately, and the

proposition was presented to the States of Holland, where it met with no opposition. It was at once converted into a resolution by a majority of twelve to seven; and six other towns were not against the measure, but confined themselves to demanding, if it would not be adviseable to add some neighbouring power, to co-operate with France in the mediation. The Equestrian Order was simply for taking it *ad referendum*. There was, therefore, a sort of unanimity in the States of Holland for confiding the mediation to France.

The proposition was next day (July 7) presented to the States-General, where it was taken *ad referendum*; and if the other provinces had been animated by a true spirit of concord, and interest for the public weal, hopes might have been entertained of seeing tranquillity quickly restored throughout the Republic. But, whilst the States of these Provinces were deliberating, and had already evinced their disinclination, an unforeseen event intervened, to which the circumstances of the moment gave such importance as to obliterate all that had preceded, solely absorbed the universal attention, that had till then been divided, and in a manner scattered among so many different objects; and which in a short time totally ruined the Republican Party.

On

On the 28th of July was seen, arrived from the Gueldres side, on the frontier of a canton of Holland, called *Krimpener-Waard*, situated between *Haafdrecht* and *Shoon-oven*, at a post called *Gower-velsche-fluys*, a train consisting of several carriages, which appeared to be advancing into the interior of the Province of Holland. The post was then occupied by a detachment of the free corps of *Gouda*, the Captain of which was by accident absent. The Lieutenant, who commanded in his room, drew up his little party, and advanced to reconnoitre these equipages. It was the Princess of Orange herself, who had come from Nimeguen, and was proceeding to the Hague, accompanied only by Mademoiselle de Staarenberg, one of her Ladies of Honour, and the Counts de Randwyck and de Bentinck. The Officer, addressing the Princess, expressed to her, very respectfully, his regret at being obliged to interrupt her journey, and excused himself, on account of his charge, which forbade him to suffer any considerable equipage to pass, without giving notice of it to the Supreme Committee established at Woerden, and requiring the orders of his General. The Princess appeared much disconcerted at this incident; and the Officer instantly dispatched an express to Woerden.

Three Members of the Committee set out immediately, and soon repaired to the Princess, with whom they entered into an explanation. She declared, that she was proceeding to the Hague, with the best intentions, in the view of there endeavouring to re-establish concord, and at the same time to secure to the Prince, her husband, his rights and prerogatives. The deputies could not be in a situation more difficult, or more delicate. They represented to the Princess, that in the circumstances in which the Province of Holland was at that moment placed; when the spirit of sedition wanted only the slightest occasion to break out in various parts; when the fermentation already shewed itself at *Helvoetsluis*, in a commotion not yet quelled; and when there was a fear that the same movement might extend to the *Brille*, and successively to the contiguous towns; it was much to be feared, that the presence of her Highness, instead of extinguishing the flames of sedition, would, on the contrary, serve as a pretext to the mutinous still to increase it; and that, in the unavoidable confusion, it would be impossible to be certain, that, notwithstanding the efforts of the well-intentioned inhabitants, the respect so justly due to her Highness should be completely preserved

I

served; that on so important an occasion they could not, of themselves, form a determination, without waiting the express orders of the States of Holland, to whom they were to send an account of what had happened; that her Highness might, until the arrival of the answer, return to Nimeguen, or, without going so far, fix on a place which might be most agreeable to her. The Princess betrayed anger and displeasure, without, however, being able to complain of being treated with a want of that respect which was her due. She at first proposed to retire to *Leerdam*\*, whither she was accompanied by the Members of the Committee, who, furnished her with a guard of honour, consisting of a detachment of Hesse-Phillipstal cavalry. But not finding suitable accommodation at this palace, she proceeded to the small town of *Shoonhove*.

The foregoing is an exact recital of this event, which at that time filled all the public papers in Europe, and occupied attention even in countries that took very little interest in what was then passing in Holland.

To view this incident merely as an individual circumstance, we should be led to consider it only as an effect of accident, and to

\* This is a Signiory, which the States of Holland heretofore presented to the House of Nassau,

ask for what purpose the Princes undertook this journey, and on what account the Supreme Committee of Woerden stopped her in her progress? But when the reader is made acquainted with what passed antecedently, what passed at that moment, and what was still to be done, he will be enabled to give to this journey the character it really merits, and to judge if it was merely an innocent excursion, as was alleged by the Stadtholderians.

The Republic was, at this epoch, become a vast theatre of seditions and commotions, more terrible than ever. In Gueldres, the town of Zutphen had just been ravaged by a sudden incursion of the very garrison, under the command of its own officers. The object was to disarm the citizens. Officers and soldiers, wearing the Orange cockade, rushed into the houses of the Patriots. The officers gave the signal for disorder, by breaking the windows of these houses. The soldiers, encouraged by the example, abandoned themselves to all the licentiousness that was to be expected from them. The havoc was dreadful. One citizen, in defending himself, killed a soldier. The Council, which was assembled, and at which the Regents also appeared with the Orange cockade, immediately tried and condemned to death this unfortunate man,

man, who was unmercifully executed on the spot. The tumult rose to such a height, that Baron de Capellen de Marsch, whom we have already mentioned, seeing his personal safety endangered, and addressing a few questions to the Commandant on the subject, received only equivocal answers; so that this hero of the Republican Party in Gueldres found himself obliged to quit the Province, where his estates were afterwards sacked, and himself executed in effigy. The unfortunate towns of Elburg and Hattem experienced, at the same time, a similar scene; in which the soldier completely destroyed whatever had escaped his fury, during the invasion of the preceding year. The same scenes, the same fury, were displayed at Arnheim, Lochem, and Duisburg; pillage, destruction, tumults, were raised in the name and under the colours of the Prince, by an unbri-dled soldiery, encouraged by its own officers, and seconded by the populace of the lowest class.

In Zealand, a Province always so dear to the Stadtholder, the spirit of Liberty had made great progress, and the opinions of the inhabitants were so divided, that of seven votes composing the States, namely, the Equestrian Order, and the towns of *Middelburg*, *Ziric Zee*,

*Terre-Goes, Tolen, Fleffingue, and Tervere*, there were on the Patriotic side, *Ziric-Zee, Fleffingue, and Tolen*; and on the other side, the Equestrian Order, *Terre-Goes* and *Tervere*; and at *Middelburg*, the balance was so exact between the two parties, that it would have been uncertain which way it inclined. but for the presence of M. Van-der Spiegel\*, who attended, though then dangerously ill.

The Prince could not leave this Province in so precarious a state; and even at the moment when Zutphen was sacked, the Stadtholderian agents were exciting a tumult at Middelburg, which burst forth with unprecedented fury: it commenced in pillage, and terminated in massacre. The populace abandoned themselves to every excess they could conceive: some Patriots were assassinated; some, who had taken shelter on the roofs, were precipitated from the tops of the houses; some were drowned; all under the eyes of a garrison, who stood and beheld these horrors, without employing the smallest means to prevent them. At length, the populace, being entirely masters, compelled the Regency to march in procession through

\* Grand Pensionary of Zealand, and afterwards Grand Pensionary of the Province of Holland.

the

the city, preceded by a large Orange standard, which was placed on the top of a tower, and they were obliged, as a conclusion of the scene, to enter into a resolution to support invariably the ancient Constitution, and oppose all the innovations which attacked the privileges of the Stadtholder. This spirit quickly extended through the whole Island of Walcheren; the same abominations arose, more or less, at Flessingue, and at Tervere, where a Regent of Zierikzee, who happened unluckily to be there, was basely dragged by the hair through the midst of the streets, by a furious mob, from whom he was with difficulty delivered; and these two cities could only escape a general pillage, by a resolution similar to that of Middelburg.

In the Province of Holland, Helvoetsluys was equally the prey of a violent sedition, the symptoms of which were already manifested at the Brille, as the Committee had assured the Princess; but, of all other places, the Hague was to furnish the most bloody example. The measures were taken, and the plan determined on. Seventy-six houses were first devoted to pillage, and the number was increased to no less than three hundred, at the head of which was the hotel of the French Ambassador. It is true, that the leaders had testified some fear  
of

of offending a powerful Monarch, in the person of his Ambassador; but it is extremely probable, that the populace, once put in motion, and incited to pillage, would not have spared that house more than any other.

Let us now explain the collateral circumstances of this extraordinary journey; for these tumultuous movements coincided nearly in time, and appeared only the scenes of one and the same drama. After the pillage of Zutphen, *M. d'Eckeren de Zuydras*, Burgomaster of that city, and one of the most violent Stadtholderians, went instantly to Nimeguen, where he gave an account of what had happened; and then it was that the Princess set out for the Hague, with the equipage we have already mentioned. *M. de Zuydras* immediately departed in a light carriage, by which he might gain time, and, travelling by another road, reached the Hague. He assembled the heads of the Orange party, informed them of the departure of the Princess, and the particular time she would arrive at the *House in the Wood*\*. This was in the night of the 28th of June. Sir James Harris passed this evening in a numerous company, where he could not conceal the

\* A villa, a quarter of a league from the city,

extreme

extreme agitation he underwent, and which was generally remarked. Absent in his conversation; and, although he plays remarkably well, absent in his play; he was perpetually mistaking the cards, committing the most palpable faults, and appeared to have brought into the company only his body, leaving his mind elsewhere, and otherwise employed. The populace had been informed of the time, and more than two thousand were assembled at the House in the Wood. About half past eleven o'clock the news arrived, that the Princess had met with some obstruction on the way, and the Count de Bentinck de Roonn was seen passing on horseback through the streets of the city, attended by two servants, and directing his course towards the House in the Wood. He was, doubtless, charged to harangue the populace, and induce them to return to the city. In fact, all this assemblage dispersed, and the night passed without tumult.

Yet, if we consider, in their connection and details, this combination of facts which succeeded each other with the rapidity of lightning, the mystery spread over the journey of the Princess, the political dispositions of those who alone were in the secret, is it easy for an impartial mind not to recognise a very great manœuvre,

by

by which it was intended, at one blow, to crush entirely the Republican party, as had been done by the same means in 1747? Are we not confirmed in this idea, when we reflect, that if the intentions of the Princess had been altogether pure, nothing would have been more easy than to give even the States of Holland notice of her arrival, and of the motives which induced her to return to the Province, a right which no one had disputed; whilst, on the other hand, the idea of endeavouring to return clandestinely, of course, cast a suspicion on the nature of her intentions?

We shall go farther. Ought we not to regard this plan of a journey as a great political conception; the greatest even that had been displayed in the whole course of the Revolution, and which would supply abundantly, and simply, the want of military force in the disposal of the Stadtholder; for this project was a two-edged weapon?

Either the Princess would pass unmolested, and arrive unexpectedly at the Hague; and then let us consider, if possible, the effect of a nocturnal insurrection, the more terrible, as the mystery of the journey had not allowed any previous preparation of the means of suppression; the facility with which the populace, inflamed

flamed by strong liquors, by the spirit of hatred, and the love of plunder, would have been led to exterminate the Patriots, sleeping in profound security; the difficulty which the members of the Council Committee would have found to assemble at their place of meeting, from the danger of being murdered by the way; the impossibility of adopting salutary resolutions, whilst the darkness would not have permitted them to know exactly the places where succours would have been most necessary; the embarrassment in which the armed force would have been placed to assemble, and determine whether to wait for orders, or to act of themselves; the fatal mistakes, the disorders which always accompany a night scene, &c.; the confusion would have been extreme; the leaders of the Republican Party would have been sacrificed, or must have sought their safety in flight; and, in either case, the dawn would have appeared, only to discover Patriotism breathing its last gasp, and leaving a complete victory to the Stadtholderian Party.

Or, supposing the Princess stopped by the troops of the *cordon*, and obliged to return, as, in fact, happened; in that case her journey could not be attended with consequences so immediate and atrocious; but this instance would

would furnish the Stadtholderian Court with a powerful motive to act with more force and success than ever, with the Minister at Berlin; and to the King, a very plausible pretext for arming in favour of the Stadtholder, without appearing desirous of interfering, unsolicited, in the internal affairs of the Republic. This actually happened, as we shall proceed to explain.

The first step of the Princess was, to write letters to the Greffier Fagel and the Grand Pensionary, in which she complains, in moderate language, of the obstruction that had been made to her route; and required, that the States should give orders to enable her to pursue her journey. Far from complaining of any want of respect on the part of the members of the Supreme Committee, she gave them, on the contrary, praise for their behaviour on this occasion, acknowledging that the most scrupulous propriety had been observed towards her, particularly by M. de Witt, who had been the organ of the deputation. The letters were read to the States, and taken *ad referendum*; but the conduct of the Supreme Committee was fully approved of, and precautions were carefully taken to secure tranquillity at the Hague and the *Flat Country*.

The

The Committee were not kept ignorant of the approbation given by the States of Holland to their behaviour towards the Princess, who, immediately after, wrote a letter to the Assembly, very different, in point of moderation, from her former ones. She complained, with haughtiness and bitterness, of the approbation granted to the Committee, instead of the exemplary satisfaction due to herself, and which she had a right to expect. The Prince, on his part, addressed the States in a memorial still more unreasonable, respecting the affront offered to his consort. This memorial was, of course, taken *ad referendum*.

This was adding fuel to fire; and, in fact, the Prince could not be ignorant of the temper of mind in Holland. Already suspended from his functions of Captain-general in that Province, he knew that a great majority wished still to extend this measure to all his other dignities, without exception, by retrenching the vast emoluments attached to them; and that, if the proposition was not solemnly carried in the States of Holland, he owed it solely to the wisdom and moderation of the leaders of the party. He should, therefore, have foreseen, that his memorial, being circulated through the towns, would, from the severity and arrogance

gance of its stile, disgust men, already so much irritated, and lead them to resolutions still more violent. The effervescence, in fact, reached a degree that seemed not susceptible of increase; and had their leaders attempted to conciliate them in favour of William, by some propitiatory measure, they must infallibly have ruined their credit, and lost all confidence.

Fully convinced of these truths, and of the impossibility of conciliating minds so much incensed against the Prince, and which he seemed still to take pleasure in daily irritating, they had conceived an altogether new idea, extremely plausible in former conjunctures, and which might have greatly smoothed their difficulties, if there had been sufficient time for its execution. It was impossible to answer this letter of the Princess; it was written in a style so repugnant to propriety, that the States would have debased their dignity by a weak and polite reply; whilst the tone of firmness, prescribed by circumstances, could only excite, on either side, an acerbity calculated to destroy for ever all hope of conciliation. It was, therefore, thought proper that a verbal reply should be given by one of the most enlightened members of the Patriotic Party, who would have declared to her frankly, and without evasion, why she ought not

not to expect any answer from the States, and that they could have no repugnance at seeing her return to Holland, had not this return, at the same time, announced that of the Prince; that the States, after all the acts of violence, and all the arbitrary and capricious vexations of William V., had determined never again to admit him into their Province; that she ought to profit by this information, to attend to the interests of the Princes, her children; and that if she wished to separate her cause and theirs from that of her husband, it would yet be possible to listen to her, endeavour to remove all difficulties, and procure her, at the Hague, the reception due to her distinguished rank.

This was placing the matter in an entirely new point of view, and, perhaps, the most proper to effect a reconciliation of all parties. The person even of William V. interested nobody, either in or out of the Republic; he was a victim which the States required, and which they considered due to their dignity; and there was reason to suppose, that the King of Prussia, satisfied to see his sister re-established in her dignities, would, without hesitation, have left the Stadtholder to a fate he had deserved from his absurdity and obstinacy, and become less particular as to the terms of accommodation

relative to the points in dispute, the command, the law, &c.

Whilst this plan was under discussion, a courier arrived from Berlin on the 9th of July. He brought M. de Thulemeyer a memorial to present to the States of Holland. This document was drawn up under extremely exaggerated ideas: the King of Prussia there talked of outrage, injury, exemplary satisfaction, threats, and punishments. Yet, the recital we have given is most scrupulously correct. It offers nothing that resembles outrage; we have stated what circumspection, what deference, what respect the Committee of Woerden constantly observed in their behaviour towards the Princess, and which, in her first letters, she made no difficulty in acknowledging, when she rendered her testimony in favour of M. de Witt in particular. The States of Holland instantly answered this memorial, and demonstrated to the King of Prussia, how much the events had been misrepresented and exaggerated; and, by a simple narrative of the facts, they proved, unanswerably, that the Committee of Woerden could not have acted otherwise.

It was not supposed possible, that the Cabinet of Berlin would reject the evidence of facts, and that it would not very much soften its language.

guage. Whilst waiting the effect of the answer of the States, the leaders of the party entered into a conference with M. de Thulermeyer, of whom they conceived they had much to complain, as they considered him the source of all the false information received at Berlin, respecting the real situation of affairs in Holland, and with whom, on this account, they had never sought any particular communication. But at this crisis, circumstances were imperious; it was indispensable that the plain truth should reach Berlin. Hence it was necessary immediately to rectify the ideas of its Minister, and to conquer their repugnance to confer with him. The French Ambassador had furnished them the means, and endeavoured to prepare both parties, in order that general utility might result from this conference. It took place in his own house, and in his presence, and the discussion was calm, and perfectly moderate. M. de Thulermeyer opened it by an able speech, in which he recapitulated the journey of the Princess, insisted much on the purity of the intentions which led her thither, and the surprise, which the unexpected interruption of this journey had occasioned the King, her brother.

M. Giffaer replied; and, with no less moderation, drew a hasty sketch of the critical situ-

tion of Holland at this moment, from the fermentation manifested, at the same time, in several quarters. This fermentation, he said, still continued, and could not but be increased to an infinite degree, by so critical a circumstance, as that of the arrival of the Princess at the Hague. It would have been more difficult to put a stop to the disturbance, as this having been unforeseen by the States, they could take no previous precaution; whilst the populace, long before informed of it by the promoters of disorder, had made every preparation. Hence the Princess, although going to the Hague with the purest intentions, would have had the mortification to see her arrival marked by a horrible scene, without the States being able to answer for the dangers which she herself might incur, amidst a tumult which no measures could have repressed. He concluded, that the States could not but highly applaud the conduct of the Committee of Woerden, which had prevented this scene of riot. He added, that if the Princess had any complaint of disrespect offered her, punishment should be inflicted on the offenders; and he requested M. de Thulemeyer to declare what he knew.

The Minister, who could never have exculpated the Princess respecting the secret of her journey,

journey, had nothing to answer to this invitation, but confined his complaints to a single fact, so futile that we should not have thought it worth notice, had not the Court of Berlin, in the sequel, affected to attach great importance to it, and consider it as a species of treason. This was, that an officer of the free corps had even entered the Princess's chamber, with his sword drawn; that he had, however, been removed by the members of the Committee, immediately on their arrival; and that afterwards two sentinels had been posted at the gate of the house.

He was answered on this last point, that these sentinels were evidently only sentinels of honour, as the Princess had, in like manner, had at the Hague; and with respect to the officer of the free corps, there ought to be an excuse for the ignorance of a man placed in an extraordinary situation, who, being obliged to act without orders, had conceived that he could not pay the Princess a greater mark of his respect, and of the attention with which he watched over her safety: that this was merely a ridiculous circumstance; and since the members of the Committee, who were well informed men, had sent away the officer the moment they discovered him, that it was beneath the dignity

of the Princess to require the punishment of an ignorant man, who acted without any bad intention ; that, besides, the States had received no information of the fact. M. de Thulemeyer appeared satisfied with this explanation.

The conference then took another turn, which was brought on by the desire the Prussian Minister expressed of being able personally to contribute to an amicable adjustment of differences. M. Gislaer explained to him the principal obstacle, in the odious measures which the Prince employed to perpetuate disturbances. M. de Thulemeyer expressed his abhorrence of these measures, and assured the meeting that the Princess did not join in her husband's sentiments on that point. Be this true or not, M. Gislaer replied, that the people of Holland had always distinguished between the Princess and the Stadtholder, whose ungovernable disposition had constantly occasioned misfortunes to the Republic ; so that if there remained any possible means of reconciliation, it was through the Princess alone that it was to be sought. And hereupon he detailed to him frankly the plan we have already mentioned ; and asked, if he himself had any objection to make the first proposals of it to the Princess. The only remark of M. de Thulemeyer,

meyer, who had listened very attentively, respected the difficulty of determining the Princesses to separate her cause from that of the Prince; but when M. Gislaer had made an enumeration of the complaints of the Sovereign against William V. and asked, if it was possible the States could forget their own dignity so far as to continue such a Stadtholder; he abandoned his objection, and answered, that he should make no difficulty in communicating this idea to the Princesses, and should instantly dispatch an account of it to his Court. Here the conference terminated.

In politics the best ideas are ever unproductive when their application is ill-timed. Some months sooner, after the first attack of Elburg and Hattem, or when the Count de Goertz and M. Rainneval were yet at the Hague, the proposition of the Patriots to M. de Thulemeyer would probably have been successful, both with the Princesses and the Court of Berlin; but then it had not occurred to them; and when the communication took place with the Prussian Minister, circumstances were no longer the same, and offered no appearance that the Princesses, supported by the arms of the King, her brother, would be con-

tented with a part, when she saw herself on the eve of obtaining the whole.

In fact, the dispatches of M. de Reede, the Minister of the Republic at Berlin, announced that twenty thousand men were assembled at Wesel; and very soon after M. de Thulemeyer received an order, to declare, in a new memorial, that the King, by no means satisfied with the answer given to the former, persevered in all his demands, and to notify to the States of Holland the assemblage of this military force. M. de Thulemeyer, after having executed these orders, imparted them to the French Ambassador. The King of Prussia, he said, had three motives for marching troops towards Wesel: 1. To follow the example set by France, who was in like manner assembling troops at Givet: 2. To put himself in a state to make his mediation respected: 3. To support the demand he made of satisfaction to the Princess his sister. To prevent any obscurity respecting this explication, we shall here state some facts, which the necessity of perspicuity, and that we might not interrupt the narrative, obliged us for some time to defer.

1. The Count de Vergennes had died in the course of the winter. The office of Minister  
for

for Foreign Affairs had been intrusted to Count de Montmorin. As soon as he became a little familiarised with the affairs of Holland, he was easily convinced that the success of the recent alliance of France with Holland was intimately connected with the success of the Republican Party; which could not remain long undetermined, if the Patriots should find in the Cabinet of Versailles, the several succours of which they might stand in need; and a liberal and decided protection, which should remove every sort of doubt respecting its intentions towards the Hollanders of all parties, in order to repress the one party, and encourage the other. The Patriots did not appear to entertain much uneasiness respecting internal affairs, of which they thought themselves masters; but they greatly dreaded external interference; and this was the only apprehension from which they were anxious that France should relieve them; and as the citizens partook equally in this disquietude, they required authentic declarations, by which they could quiet their minds. The Court, through the medium of the Ambassador, spared neither promises nor assurances; but they persisted in demanding official declarations, which alone they could employ towards their friends and against their

their enemies. The Cabinet of Versailles was afraid to make these engagements, it was afraid of suffering itself to be embarked farther than it wished ; and to get rid of the difficulties which the exposition of these declarations presented, Count de Montmorin conceived a plan of forming a camp of fifteen or sixteen thousand men at Givet. It was proposed to the Council, and adopted ; and the Hollanders having received notice of it, they considered this measure infinitely superior to all the declarations they had required. However, notwithstanding the good intentions of the Count de Montmorin, of the Marthal de Ségur, then Minister of War, whose department it was, and even of M. de Calonne, the Comptroller-General, who had the funds ready, and who had cogent reasons to interest himself greatly in the success of the Republican Party in Holland, the camp never was formed. The Archbishop of Sens, then First Minister, undoubtedly thought that the funds prepared for this measure might be more usefully employed, and probably persuaded himself, that the mere report of assembling troops at Givet might produce the same effect as the camp itself. He therefore suffered the report to circulate, and thought no more of the thing itself. It was to this proposed camp

camp that M. de Thulemeyer alluded in the first of the three grounds given for assembling twenty thousand Prussians at Wesel.

2. It has been already seen that there had been presented to the States of Holland the proposition of referring to France the mediation of the differences among the Provinces of the Republic; that this proposition had been agreed to by the Assembly, and thereafter carried to the States-General, where it had been taken *ad referendum*. The States of the Provinces had deliberated on this subject, and manifested their intentions, according to their different political sentiments. Over-Yffel, as well as the new States of Utrecht, followed exactly the vote of Holland; Friesland declined every foreign interference, and particularly that of France; the others would admit the French mediation, provided Prussia and England were conjoined to it, and Zealand even wished to add the Court of Vienna. The proposition never again appeared in the States-General; but the knowledge of the intentions of some provinces was sufficient for Prussia to consider herself as called on to the mediation, the participation of which could be nowise repugnant to France.

3. The

3. The King of Prussia demanded an exemplary satisfaction, such as the States of Holland could not grant, without signing at the same time the act of their own disgrace.

Circumstances were become extremely embarrassing; the Prussian troops were arrived under the command of the Duke of Brunswick. That Prince, on some frivolous pretext, which could deceive nobody, had made a journey to Nimeguen; and there was no doubt but his real object was to concert with the Prince of Orange the plan of the military operations that were to be executed, if the perseverance of the Republican Party should render them necessary.

At the Hague the nomination began on the 18th, and continued without interruption until the 20th, when it was in a moment suspended. This was a proud day of triumph for the Stadtholderian Party, on which the Prince re-entered the Hague, after an absence of two years. This entry, made with great solemnity, amidst ranks formed by the garrison of the city, in a carriage rather borne than drawn by a populace intoxicated with joy, who made the air resound with their acclamations, was a death-blow to the Republican Spirit and the French Party.

No

No sooner had the first transports subsided, than the outrages recommenced with the same fury as formerly; they continued the following days with more or less violence, and the storm was not entirely appeased till towards the 4th of the month following.

The Stadtholder, during his journey, did not fail to change the Regencies of the towns of South-Holland, neither did these new Regencies fail to send new Deputations to the States. These changes secured to the Prince a majority of sixteen votes to three in the Assembly; the Opposition Towns were Amsterdam, Alkmaar, and Purmerend, where the alteration of the Regencies had not yet been effected; the States of Holland thus constituted, commenced their deliberations by the revocation of all the resolutions passed against the Stadtholder by the Patriotic States.

He was then reinstated in all his former powers, as well in respect to his functions of Captain-General, as with regard to the command of the garrison of the Hague. The Committee of Woerden was also revoked, and the Princess invited by a formal resolution to return to the Hague. These measures were the work of the Sitting of the 21st, the day following that of the entry of the Prince; and on the same day  
another

another resolution was passed, which directly interested France; its purport was, that “ Tran-  
“ quillity having been happily restored to the  
“ country by the return of the Stadtholder to the  
“ Hague; and the restitution which had been  
“ made to him of all his rights and prerogatives,  
“ as well as by the satisfaction made to the  
“ Princess; the resolution, by which assistance  
“ had been demanded of the King, against  
“ the Prussian army was thereby annulled;  
“ and that information should be communi-  
“ cated to his Majesty, not doubting but that  
“ he would feel considerable interest in this  
“ happy re-establishment of tranquillity; and  
“ that he would recal the order which he  
“ might have already given for the march of  
“ his troops on the first invitation.”

This resolution, notwithstanding the stroke of irony which it contained, was not the less perfectly constitutional. Thus France, legally excluded from the scene, had no other means of re-entering it but by breaking with Prussia; which must very soon have occasioned a rupture with England, and perhaps have kindled a general war in Europe.

Meanwhile the Prussians advanced into the Province of Holland, where the States themselves opened the gates of all their towns to them,

them, by resolutions which prohibited every sort of resistance. Their progress experienced no difficulty till after they entered Utrecht. They attempted to force the posts of the cordon, such as Woerden, Nieversluys, Wesop, Minden, &c. They lost many men, particularly at Nieversluys, in some successful sorties, which the besieged made against them. At the approaches to Amsterdam, some villages, such as Oudekerk, Amstel-veen, and others, made a defence very honourable for themselves, and very destructive to the Prussians, from the necessity of their advancing on narrow banks, and enfiladed by the cannon of these posts. However, they were all carried, one after another, and the weak garrisons, which defended them, retreated successively to Amsterdam.

The general command of this great city had been conferred on the Chevalier de Ternant, who had thrown himself into it with the free corps of Over-Yffel, which he commanded. The Regents and the Citizens had invested him with the most extensive powers. Never had their confidence been more judiciously placed. As far removed from the braggadocio of the Rhingrave de Salm as he was superior to him in military talents, the Chevalier de Ternant would, undoubtedly,

undoubtedly, have rendered important services to the city, which had entrusted him with its interests; but the bad constitution of this city shackled all his most salutary measures. The Council of the Regency, too timid to dare of itself to approve of a single proceeding, without submitting it to the discussion and opinion of the citizens, occasioned a tardiness in their operations, absolutely incompatible with the danger of the moment. On the other hand, the armed citizens and the free corps did not obey the requisitions of the General, but in the manner in which they understood them. Hence, for example, when he demanded fifteen hundred men to be immediately employed in any particular work, or expedition, three or four hundred presented themselves in succession, and the expedition failed; because it was impossible to employ constraint over defenders of this fort, who were attached only by the tie of inclination. Thus it was that the part\* which defended the famous sluice, situated mid-way betwixt Haerlem and Amsterdam, and which

\* At this place, the Haerlem Zee and the Ye approach each other so nearly, that the breadth of the sluice only forms the separation of the two seas. This width is not one hundred feet.

was

was truly impregnable, had it been defended by a force somewhat stronger, was, however, surprized by the Prussians, who turned it, by navigating in barges on the Ye, and thus taking it in the rear, soon rendered themselves masters of it.

It was still possible to dislodge them. The Chevalier de Ternant proposed it, and pledged himself for its success, if he were furnished with the requisite force. He experienced the same obstacles; and thenceforward deeming his presence inutile, he gave in his resignation, quitted the city, escaped through the midst of the Prussians, and returned to France.

In order to understand the critical situation of Amsterdam, it is sufficient to glance the eye over the map. The Duke of Brunswick was at its gates. Even France advised it to yield to the unfortunate circumstances, and to think only of obtaining the least disadvantageous capitulation possible. This advice no longer left the smallest ray of hope to the Regents, who were obliged to yield to the hard and imperious law of necessity. They, therefore, entered into a conference with the Duke of Brunswick, and proposed immediately to determine what kind of satisfaction should be rendered to the Princess; for the Duke had

signified that this point being settled, his mission was finished. They still thought they might be able to obtain some modification of the conditions announced in M. de Thulemeyer's last note; but assuredly, this shewed how little they were acquainted with the implacable disposition of the Princess, to believe that she would deny herself the pleasure of revenge, when she was in possession of the means.

She was absolutely inflexible. It was expected she would content herself with punishing the members of the Committee of Woerden, who had obstructed her journey to the Hague, since that was the only offence which had been personally offered to her; none of the other acts concerned her, for the consort of the Stadtholder was in reality a non-entity in the political state, during the life of her husband; but she could not allow an occasion, which appeared to her so natural, to escape, of extending the proscription to the most distinguished members of the Republican Party.

The Princess, therefore, at first declared that she would spare the lives of the offenders; but after this excess of clemency and generosity, she announced her intention of depriving them of all their employments, and that they should  
be

be rendered incapable of ever again serving the Republic. Messrs. *Block*, *Cammerling*, *de Witt*, *Toulon*, *Van-Foreest*, composed the Committee of the States of Holland; *Costerius*, Burgomaster of Woerden, Secretary to the old Committee of Defence, established in that town; *Delange*, Counsellor of the Regency of Gouda; *Gislaer*, Pensionary of Dort; *Zeeberb* and *Van-casteelen*, Pensionaries of Haerlem; *Van-Berkel* and *Visscher*, Pensionaries of Amsterdam; *Kempenaar*, Counsellor of Alkmaer; *Abbema*, *Bicker*, *Van-Leyden*, and *Dijonge*, of the Council of Regency of Amsterdam.

Such were the terms which Amsterdam was obliged to accept. Her negociators also demanded, that their city should receive no garrison, either Prussian or National. The first article was granted, and even the second; but with this clause, *that at least the Regency should not make the demand*; but as the old Stadtholderian Regency was soon to resume its functions, it was certain, beforehand, that this demand would not fail immediately to be made: thus the clause was merely illusory. The capitulation was signed on the 10th, and the same day, the Prussians took possession of the Haerlem-gate, and General Count de Kalereuten entered the city.

Of the persons proscribed, Messrs. *Gislaer*, *Abbema*, and *de Witt*, quitted their country, where they did not think themselves in safety. *M. de Capellen de Marsch*, since condemned at Gueldres to lose his head, had preceded them. A crowd of people, from the different towns of the Province, retired into the French territory; and during the remainder of the year, the emigration was very considerable. The French Government afforded this multitude a kind reception, collected at St. Omer's, and furnished it with the means of subsistence, the direction and distribution of which formed a particular department of administration.

*M. Van-Berkel* remained in Amsterdam, and continued, in spite of Stadtholderian persecution, to receive from his fellow citizens every mark of respect and esteem due to his virtues. *M. Paulus* experienced the same regard at Rotterdam, where, amidst all the disturbances, his person and property were always respected. He even, for some time, retained his employment, which he thought his duty did not permit him to resign until it was required. This probably would not have happened, owing to the universally established opinion of his virtues and talents: but it did not suit the English interest that a Minister of  
so

so much genius should remain at the head of the Dutch Marine, and the British Ambassador accordingly obtained his removal.

The Grand Pensionary of Holland did not await the termination of his *quinquennium*, which would expire in the month of November; he gave in his resignation, and was succeeded by M. Vander-Spiegel. He scarcely survived the catastrophe: the study of mathematics, to which he was attached, could not divert the vexation which accompanied him in his retreat, and carried him off a few months afterwards.

We shall add yet a few words, in order to complete this distressing picture. It was necessary to reward the Stadtholderian regiments, whom corruption and promises had engaged to the Anti-Republican cause. These promises were accomplished by the same means, which had already served to recompense the populace for its zeal. A fresh pillage was organized by and for them, in the towns which had distinguished themselves the most for their spirit of Liberty and Patriotism. None of them could escape the calamity. They all suffered in a less or greater degree, but that was the sole difference. We shall only mention the disaster of Bois-le-Duc, a large and beautiful city,

composed of four thousand houses, of which only seven hundred were spared by the garrison; but two thousand were entirely devastated, and the others all, without exception, had their windows broken. The booty was immense; but the Government did not appear in the affair. It is true, some effects were found, and restored to their proprietors, and a few soldiers were put under arrest. This was merely a form, and their punishment extended no farther. Meanwhile, terror reigned in the city, and spread from thence into the *Flat Country*, whence the inhabitants escaped as they could, carrying their most valuable effects with them, and retired into the Country of Liege. The same sentiment pervaded Maastricht, and produced the same consequences. The emigration from those countries was so considerable, that the Government of Liege deemed it expedient to pass an edict, exempting the effects belonging to the fugitives from any impost, on entering its territory; a regulation which would not have been adopted, had not the number of these fugitives merited attention.

Thus, in the space of a few weeks, was demolished that structure, of which the Republican spirit had laid the foundations, and for whose completion it had laboured several years,

... I

without

without interruption. The only monument of it, which still remained, was the alliance with France; and it may be easily conceived, with what pleasure the English and the Stadtholders exerted themselves for its annihilation. They perfectly agreed on the substance, but they could not dispense with using such a form as might not be offensive; because, even then, they could not treat the Court of France like the Regency of a town of the Province of Holland: although it was but too true, that, at this epoch of total inertion, much might have been hazarded against it, without dreading that it would display any resentment. England, the party chiefly concerned, thought it sufficient to allow the name of this alliance to subsist, provided the effect was radically destroyed; and this the States-General easily obtained, by also forming an alliance with England and Prussia at the same time. The latter might, perhaps, be indifferent to France, whose interests were not in constant collision with those of Prussia, as they were with those of England. But the treaty with France would be invalidated by that with Great Britain. The intention of the Cabinet of Versailles was to wrest the Republic from the English. This treaty reduced them, at least, to a division:—

Y 4

and

and what division? In the event of a war with England, we might depend upon the Republic. Then the States-General would hold the balance betwixt the two nations, judge from which party the aggression proceeded, and embrace the cause of the injured party. Now it is obvious, that England would always be the party injured. In a word, France would lose all her influence in Holland. England would recover all that she had formerly exercised. She could not hesitate a moment.

Accordingly, the proposition was carried in the States-General, by the City of Utrecht, on the 15th of October. It was taken *ad referendum*, and submitted to the States of each Province, who, in succession, approved of it unanimously. It was returned, at length, on the 14th of December, to the States-General, where it passed definitively into a resolution.

Conferences were immediately opened with the English and Prussian Ministers, for the purpose of forming the treaties. The alliance with Prussia presented no considerable obstacle; in fact, it concerned only a reciprocal guarantee of dominions in Europe, the settling of mutual succours, in case of an attack on either of the contracting Powers by a third, but more especially

cially of an express guarantee of the Dutch Constitution, on the part of Prussia.

The treaty with England experienced greater difficulties, from the complication of the interests of the two nations, in regard to the commerce and navigation in the East Indies; but these difficulties were, in a great measure, delayed to the period in which the two nations should arrange a new treaty of commerce. And the treaty of alliance, with the exception of an article relative to their common defence in the East Indies, consisted in the accustomed stipulations of succours, mutually to be furnished in case of an attack; of a reciprocal guarantee of possessions in and out of Europe; and particularly a formal engagement, by which England bound herself to guarantee to the Republic her Constitution and the Stadtholderate.

It is almost incomprehensible what is meant by guaranteeing to a nation its own Constitution, unless the object of such guarantee be to secure that nation from the efforts, which a foreign power may exert to overturn its Constitution against its will. But, if by this be understood that the Constitution, thus guaranteed, shall be so far subjected, that the nation itself loses the right of changing it, when they think proper, nothing can be more absurd, or  
contrary

contrary to the ideas of the Law of Nations: it is repugnant to the nature of things, that, when a nation has chosen any form of Government whatsoever, and time and experience have discovered its abuses and vices, it cannot be changed at their pleasure; and thus deprive themselves of the most unalienable of their rights. This is the second example which Europe has witnessed of such a monstrous guarantee; the first example occurred at the first partition of Poland.

Reverting to our subject, the two treaties of alliance with Prussia and England were signed at the Hague; the first on the 4th of April, the second on the 15th of the same month, in 1788; and soon after ratified by the two Courts.

In this manner the Revolution was completed in Holland, which left it only the name of a Republic, whilst subjugating it to the most absolute despotism; a despotism the more odious, because those who exercised it, being concealed under an unassuming title, and under the forms of apparent liberty, might continually insult their real Sovereign, and hurry it into measures the most adverse to the public weal, without becoming responsible to any person but themselves, for the errors of their own conduct. Therefore, when the people, in their delirium, proposed

proposed to confer on the Stadtholder the title of Count Sovereign of Holland, he rejected that dangerous dignity, which, by directly attaching the supreme authority to his person, would have deprived the Provincial States, and the States-General, of even the mere shadow of Sovereignty, which they had preserved, and would have created to him a perpetual succession of enemies, who would have been incessantly employed in opposing his authority, in order to repossess themselves of all that he had been able to extort from them. Did he need this vain title, when the real power annexed to it was already in his possession, and its quiet enjoyment was secured, in defiance of all jealousy, and of every kind of danger?

It is mortifying to reflect, that the most distinguished characters in the Republic, for the purity of their sentiments, and their knowledge, were proscribed, persecuted, dispersed, and banished from their country: that this Republic, whose physical existence was a masterpiece of the industry of mankind in a social state, and which, under the beneficent rays of Liberty, had flourished by commerce, and contained in its bosom a vast part of the wealth of Europe: that this happy country, so respectable for the antient simplicity of its manners,  
suddenly

suddenly beheld the spirit of Liberty totally extinguished by the infectious breath of Despotism: and that this strange metamorphose was the effect of the absurd obstinacy of one man, and the vanity of one woman.

The Patriots can be reproached with only one fault, and that fault even does honour to the purity of their principles; that was, too scrupulous an adherence to constitutional forms, at a period when their adversaries were daily violating them openly, by preserving in the States-General the deputation of Amersfort, which could not legally represent the voice of the Province of Utrecht. But France is, and will ever be inexcusable, for having abandoned her faithful friends at the moment when her succours were become indispensable to them; and not having even averted that moment by one of those measures, of which she was obliged to render an account to nobody, and which might have stopped, or, at least, a long time suspended, the Prussian invasion of Holland. The reader will see that we allude to the camp at Givet. There is the most satisfactory evidence, that if it had been assembled, whatever regard the King of Prussia might entertain for his sister, he would not have wished to support her cause by force of arms, and commence, by putting

putting himself in a state of war against France. But France did nothing, and no person respects those who know not how to make themselves respectable.

Republican France has repaired the wrongs of Monarchical France. The Liberty the Dutch, fought in 1787, was very incomplete, and contained in itself the seeds of its own destruction, by preserving the Stadtholderate. At this day, founded on the sacred and imprescriptible Rights of Man and of the Citizen, it rests on an immoveable basis. The new Batavian Republic, enlightened by experience, now knows how to distinguish between its friends and its natural enemies. The English were no less its enemies, in preserving the Stadtholderate in 1787, than they are at the present time, when attempting to invade its territory, and stifle Liberty in its cradle. It has every reason to recognise the identity of its interests with those of the Republic of France, and this conviction will, doubtless, render their union as durable as the existence of the two nations.

## APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX.

---

LETTER FROM COUNT DE SAINT-PRIEST, THE  
FRENCH AMBASSADOR, TO THE MARQUIS DE  
LA FAYETTE.

*Antwerp, Sept. 26, 1787.*

I HAVE received, my dear Marquis, your very agreeable letter. I put the highest value on your friendship, and am honoured by your esteem. My embassy has not been distant, as you must know. I am now at Antwerp; God knows how long. I have arrived hither in time to learn the entrance yesterday of the Prussian troops into Utrecht. Three months sooner, I would have engaged to call you; the corps of Givet would have been assembled, and our ally been ours for ever. We must have a brush at present; and forty thousand men could not do what ten thousand might have done without difficulty. Keep a watchful eye, if our troops march. You are wished for in Holland; and our movements might create a party there. Ternant has the command at Amsterdam, and would serve under you with joy. But if we do not march, this commission is of no value to you.

you. I do not know if the city will long hold out. I would, with all my heart, oblige the Count de Potange; but I am engaged. My opinion is, that I am left here till our party revives in Holland: we are here, at this moment, rejected by both parties; by the one, for having opposed it; and the other, for having abandoned it.

EDICT

## EDICT RESPECTING RELIGION.

*Frederic William, by the Grace of God\*, King of Prussia, &c.*

**L**ONG before our accession to the throne, we had observed and remarked, how necessary it would one day be to endeavour, after the example of our predecessors, and particularly of our deceased grandfather, to maintain, and partly re-establish, in the Prussian dominions, the Christian Faith of the Protestant Church, in its ancient and primitive purity; to repress, as much as possible, infidelity and superstition, and, by this means also, the corruption of the fundamental truths of the Christian Religion, and the licentiousness of morals, which is a consequence of it; and thus to give, at the same time, to our faithful subjects a convincing proof, what they have a right to expect from us as their Sovereign, in respect to their most important concern, that is to say, an entire liberty of conscience, their tranquillity and security in the persuasion which they have embraced, and in the faith of their fathers, as well as in

\* The King restored this form, which Frederic had abolished.

respect to protection against all perturbators of their divine service and religious constitution; in consequence whereof, having regulated to the present time the most urgent affairs of the State, and made some necessary and beneficial new arrangements, we have wished not to defer a single moment, to think seriously of this other important duty, which our quality of Sovereign imposes on us, and to publish, by the present edict, our immutable will on this subject.

1. We order, enjoin, and command, that all the three principal persuasions of the Christian Religion, namely, the Reformed, the Lutheran, and the Roman Catholic, be preserved, maintained, and protected, in all the Provinces of our dominions, according to the Constitution which they have till now had, conformably to divers edicts and ordinances of our predecessors, of happy memory.

2. But, on the other hand, we will, that the ancient toleration, which has long distinguished the Prussian dominions, in respect of other religious sects and parties, be preserved as before; and that at no time shall it be suffered to constrain, in any manner, the consciences of our subjects, whilst each of them peaceably fulfils, as a good citizen, his duties to the State, keeps  
to

to himself his private opinions, and takes strict care not to disseminate them, to persuade others of them, and to inspire them with errors or uncertain ties relative to their faith; for, as to every man belongs the care of his own salvation, it is necessary that, in this matter, he exercises entire liberty; and, in our opinion, the cares of a Christian Prince, in this respect, ought to be confined to causing the people to be instructed, by the teachers and preachers, in the purity and incorruptibility of true Christianity; and thus procuring to every one the means of learning and adopting it. But if the subjects wish to profit or not of this opportunity, so liberally offered, and take advantage of it for their own conviction, this ought to be left to every man's conscience.

The sects publicly tolerated in our dominions until now are, besides the Jewish nation, the Hernoutes, the Memnonites, and the Society of the Bohemian Brethren, which hold their religious assemblies under the protection of the Sovereign, and they shall retain that liberty, which is nowise injurious to the State. But our Ecclesiastical Department must hereafter take care, that there be not held, under the name of a religious assembly, other meetings hurtful to the Christian Religion and to the

State; means which might be adopted by new teachers, and other dangerous men, to gain adherents and make profelytes, which would be a great abuse of toleration.

3. We expressly forbid, in all persuasions without distinction, every species of profelytism; and we desire, that no Ecclesiastics or other persons of different religious sects shall mix, in order to make profelytes, force, engage, or persuade, in any manner whatsoever, those of a different persuasion, to adopt and receive their particular principles or opinions on Religion, or aim any blow at the liberty of conscience of others. It is, however, very different, if any one, from his own free internal conviction, desires to quit one persuasion for another, this ought to be left entirely free to all, and no obstruction be given thereto. Only it is necessary that those who wish to take this step do not so secretly; but, in order to avoid every inconvenience in civil relations, they should announce their change of religion to the superintendants.

4. As there has long been imputed to the Roman Catholic Priests this zeal for making profelytes, and notwithstanding a rumour has lately arisen, that Catholic Priests, Monks, and Jesuits in disguise, secretly introduce themselves into

into Protestant countries, in order to convert the alleged heretics; and that we are determined not to suffer such things in our dominions, we forbid in all our dominions this proselytism, not only in particular to Catholic Priests, but we order also our Consistories, and all the faithful vassals and subjects of our dominions, to watch attentively, in order to discover these sorts of emissaries, and give notice of them to the Ecclesiastical Department, that there be given the necessary orders.

5. As we have great aversion to proselytism in all persuasions, because it may be attended with all sorts of bad consequences among the multitude, we have, on the contrary, no less satisfaction in seeing Clergy and Laity, Reformed, Lutherans, and Roman Catholics, living together, as at present, in a tolerant and fraternal union with regard to their religion. In consequence, we exhort them to preserve carefully, hereafter, the same harmony among each other; and, far from our ever opposing different persuasions from lending mutual succours, with respect to their churches, and houses of prayer for public worship, or in any other manner, this conduct will, on the contrary, be highly agreeable to us.

6. We order, at the same time, that, in the Reformed as well as in the Lutheran Church, the old liturgies and ecclesiastical ordinances shall be preserved; only we consent to this, that, in the said persuasions, the language be changed of those ordinances made at the time when the German language was not yet formed, and be better accommodated to the customs of our times. We are also desirous that some ancient usages and inessential ceremonies be abolished; which we leave to the disposition of our Ecclesiastical Department of the two Protestant persuasions. But the said department shall take great care to avoid making any change in the essentials of the ancient dogmas of each persuasion. This ordinance appears to us the more necessary, because,

7. Some years before our elevation to the throne, we have observed with regret, that several Clergy of the Protestant Communion, permit themselves a liberty altogether unbounded with regard to the dogmas of their persuasion; that they deny several fundamental points and truths of the Christian Religion in general, and in their exhortations adopt a new fangled stile, entirely different from the spirit of true Christianity, which might in the end shake the pillars of the faith of Christians. They blush not to  
renew

renew the miserable errors of Socinians, Deists, and Naturalists, long ago refuted, and to diffuse them among the people with as much boldness as imprudence, under the name of Philosophy, by a strange abuse of that name. They blush not to diminish daily the authority of the Bible, as the revealed Word of God, to falsify that divine source of the salvation of mankind; to give forced explanations of it, or even to reject it entirely; to represent it to men as suspicious and superfluous faith in the mysteries of revealed religion in general; and particularly the mysteries of the redemption and sacrifice of the Saviour of the World; to lead them thus into error, and in this manner everywhere to brave Christianity. We understand, however, that these improprieties are absolutely destroyed in our dominions; for we consider it one of the first duties of a Christian Prince to protect, in his dominions, from every falsification, the Christian Religion, the excellence and advantages of which have long since been indubitably proved; to maintain it there in all its ancient and primitive dignity, splendour, and purity, such as it is laid down in the Bible, according to the conviction of every persuasion of the Christian Church, as well as it is determined in the symbolical books of each of

these persuasions; and, in order that the poor people may not be made the sport of the illusions of new-fangled teachers, and that millions of our good subjects may not be deprived of the tranquillity of their life, and their consolation on a death-bed, and thus be devoted to misery,

8. We therefore order and command, in quality of Sovereign, and as the sole and only Legislator in our dominions, all Ecclesiastics, Preachers, and Schoolmasters of the Protestant Religion, under pain of deprivation, or even a more severe punishment according to the case, that in future they be not guilty of the errors indicated in the 7th article, or others of the same species, by disseminating them in the exercise of their functions, or in any other manner public or private. Because, in like manner, as for the prosperity of the kingdom and the good of our subjects, we are obliged to preserve the civil laws in all their authority, and cannot permit any judge or administrator of these laws to alter the substance of them, or change them at his pleasure; so in like manner, and still less, shall we suffer that, in matters of religion, each Ecclesiastic shall act according to his own ideas and pleasure, and that he shall be at liberty to instruct the people, in such or such a manner,  
in

in the fundamental truths of Christianity; to adopt or reject them at their discretion; to present articles of faith according to their will, in their true light, or to substitute for them their reveries. On the contrary, it is necessary that there should be a model, a rule, and a regulation, (*Richtschnur, norma und regel*), firmly established, according to which the people may be faithfully and sincerely instructed by the Teachers in matters of faith; and this rule has been, till now, in our dominions the Christian Religion, according to the three principal persuasions, that is to say, the Reformed, the Lutheran, and the Roman Catholic, of which the Prussian Monarchy has always approved; and this general rule, considered even under this political view, we are not disposed to allow to be changed, in the minutest article, by these pretended apostles of Philosophy, (*Aufklärer*), after their disordered ideas. Every man who teaches Christianity in our dominions, and who styles himself a member of one of the three persuasions, ought, therefore, on the contrary, to teach that which bears the fixed and positive doctrine of the sect of his religion, for to that he is bound by his office, his duty, and the conditions under which he was invested with the priesthood. If he teach any other thing,  
he

he is already punishable by the civil laws, and he cannot properly longer hold his office. In consequence, our serious intentions tend to the maintenance of this immutable order, though in other respects we freely grant to the Ecclesiastics, in our dominions, a liberty of conscience equal to that of our other subjects, and are very far from constraining them in the smallest degree, with regard to their internal conviction. Thus, the Minister of the Christian Religion, who, in respect of faith, is convinced of things contrary to those prescribed to him by the doctrine of his conscience, ought to take care lest this conviction lead him into risks and dangers; for we wish not to arrogate any authority over his conscience. But according to this same conscience, he ought to cease teaching in his church; he ought to resign a charge which, for the above-mentioned reasons, he feels himself incapable of fulfilling; for the doctrine of the Church ought not to be regulated according to the conviction of this or that Ecclesiastic, but, on the contrary, the conviction of the Ecclesiastics on the doctrine of the Church; and such an Ecclesiastic cannot of right be or remain such; therefore he must remove. However, from our great love of liberty of conscience in general, we are willing even to suffer the Ecclesiastics,

astics, who may be known to be unfortunately more or less infected by the errors expressed in article 7, to remain quiet in their charges; only in the instructions they give their flock, the rules of doctrine must always be kept sacred and inviolable. But if they act in a manner contrary to our present Sovereign ordinance, and do not preach faithfully, thoroughly, the doctrine of their persuasion, and who preach even the contrary, so marked a disobedience of our present Sovereign ordinance will, infallibly, be followed by deprivation, and even be punished still more severely.

9. In consequence we order, by the present edict, our Ecclesiastical Department of the Reformed and Lutheran Religion to have constantly an attentive eye over all the Ecclesiastics of our dominions, in order that all those who teach in the churches and schools do their duty; and that what we have prescribed in article 8 may be observed with the greatest exactness; and we will, that in the two Protestant communions, the ministers and heads of this department be answerable to us for them; for we oblige them, on their conscience, and besides, we depend entirely on them, hoping, that as faithful servants of the State, they will incessantly watch over the observance of our present edict,

edict, that they may avoid our most complete disgrace.

10. In consequence we order, as graciously as seriously, the heads of the two Ecclesiastical Departments to give their principal attention that the Livings and the Chairs of Theology in our Universities, as well as the places in the Schools, be filled by persons who have given no reason to doubt of their being perfectly convinced of what they ought to teach publicly: but all the other candidates, who manifest other principles, ought to be excluded without delay, an exclusion of which we give the liberty and power to the said Ministers.

11. As from all this it sufficiently appears, that we very seriously wish to maintain the Christian Religion in our dominions, and, as much as possible, to increase the true fear of God among the people; we exhort all our faithful subjects to embrace a pious life; and on all occasions we shall know to esteem the man of religion and virtue; for a wicked and unconscientious man can never be a good subject, and still less a faithful servant of the State, neither in small things nor great.

12. As the solemnization and sanctification of Sundays and holidays are recommended by  
divers

divers edicts and ordinances of our pious predecessors, particularly those of the 17th December, 1689; 24 June, 1693; 28 October, 1711; 10 February, 1715; and 18 August, 1718; these edicts and ordinances, considered in respect of their contents, ought not to be abolished. But we reserve to ourselves to publish by one particular law of police ulterior ordinances, more express and conformable to the present time.

13. No person ought to condemn, debase, or rail at the Ecclesiastical State; this we always see with the greatest displeasure, and shall not fail to punish it according to the exigency of the case, because that these things have but too often an inevitable influence in occasioning contempt of religion itself. We shall, on the contrary, pay particular attention, on all occasions, to the well-being of the Ministers and Preachers who have fulfilled their duties; and to give them a proof of it, we hereby renew the edict of the King our Grandfather, of happy memory, of the 14th October, 1737, on the subject of exempting their sons from military service; and we ordain that all the sons of Ecclesiastics in general, as well as the sons of the Public Instructors of Youth, in the towns included in the cantons, be comprised in this exemption,

exemption, if they are devoted to the sciences, the arts, drawing, or commerce; but those who prefer a trade, or any other profession, or who have studied without success, shall be excluded from the privilege; and, in that respect we shall give the necessary orders to our regiments for their service, according to the rule in the cantons.

14. Lastly, We ordain all our Consistories, as well as all the other Magistrates, ecclesiastical and laical, of our dominions, to look to this with all the attention and severity possible; and we enjoin other Ecclesiastics, and all our faithful vassals and subjects, to conform to it; for such is our will, alike serious and gracious.

*Given at Potsdam, the 19th July, 1788.*

FREDERIC WILLIAM, DE CARMER,  
DE DÖRENBERG, DE WOELLNER,

EDICT

## EDICT OF CENSORSHIP.

*Frederic William, &c.*

**ALTHOUGH** we are perfectly convinced of the many and great advantages of a moderate and well-regulated liberty of the press, for expanding the sciences and all useful knowledge, and although we are accordingly determined to favour, as much as we can, that liberty within our dominions; however, experience has shewn us the dangerous consequences of an unrestrained liberty in this respect, and how much inconsiderate, and even wicked writers abuse it, in order to disseminate practical errors, generally dangerous in matters most important to mankind; to corrupt the morals by lascivious descriptions and attractive pictures of vice; to rail maliciously and blame wickedly the public establishments and arrangements; which produces and encourages vexation and discontent in a number of ignorant persons, and to gratify vile and private passions, such as calumny, envy, and revenge, which disturb the repose of many good and useful citizens, and lessen their respect for Government, effects which are particularly produced  
by

by writings adapted to the multitude (*Volks-schriften.*)

But, in as much as the composition of books is not in the hands of men who are truly employed in the research, examination, publication, and progress of truth, but that it is considered by a great part of those who are engaged in it merely as a trade, proper to favour their love of gain, and to answer private views with respect to Government; therefore, in order to avoid the abuses which may thence result, and because, in our age particularly, these abuses are considerably increased, and make rapid progress, we have judged it proper to order to be examined, to renew in the necessary particulars, and to fix and determine more particularly and suitably, the laws and ordinances of censorship heretofore published in our dominions, and particularly the edict of the 11th of May, 1749, and the proclamation of the 1st of June, 1772, and to conclude the whole in this present edict of censorship.

1. All books and other publications shall be subject to censorship, and shall not be sold, either publicly or privately, without license of the censors.

2. The object of censorship is not to prevent a decent and becoming enquiry into truth,

but only to stop all that may be directed against the principles of religion, government, moral and civil order, and the honour and character of others.

3. In the Electoral district the Censorship of theological and philosophical works shall be entrusted to the superior Consistory of Berlin; and in the other provinces to the Provincial Consistories, jointly with the Regency. That of works on jurisprudence and the administration of justice, which shall be published at Berlin, and in the Provinces of Moyenne and Ukraine, to the Tribune of Justice (*Kammergericht*) of this city; in other provinces, to the Provincial Regencies and Colleges of Justice; those respecting physic and surgery to the Colleges of Physic and Surgery in the provinces where they are published, or else to the College of Physic at Berlin. All the works respecting the public state (*Statum publicum*) of the Germanic Empire and the Royal Family, the rights of Foreign Powers, the States of the Empire of Germany, &c. shall, in order to be licensed, be presented to the Department of Foreign Affairs, and Censors appointed by that department. Journals, weekly publications, literary gazettes, novels, dramatic pieces, &c. shall be licensed by the Universities in the

VOL. I.

A A

districts

districts where they are published, or else by the Provincial Colleges of Justice. Fugitive pieces of poetry, Exercises of Colleges, &c. by the Magistrates of the districts, where there is no University. Political gazettes shall be licensed at Berlin by a Censor named by the Department of Foreign Affairs; in the provinces by the Provincial Colleges.

4. From the preceding ordinance are exempted the books and writings of the Academy of Sciences, and of the individual Members of that Society, as well as of the College of Physic and Surgery. The books and writings printed in the Universities are submitted to the Censorship of the Faculty to which they belong; excepting, however, those which treat of public law and political history, which are always to be presented to the Censor appointed by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

5. The works, according to the above classification, shall be presented by the printer or editor to the Head of the College, who may, on examining the same, and finding them unattended with danger, grant, without any other form, a licence to print them; but if he has the smallest doubt, he shall, without delay, communicate the manuscript to the Members of the College.

#### 6. Editors

6. Editors and authors, who are dissatisfied with the decisions of the Censors, shall be permitted to carry their complaints to the proper tribunal.

7. Editors and printers, who have presented their works to the Censors, and received their approbation, shall be no longer responsible for the contents; but this exemption shall not extend to the author, who may have succeeded in deceiving or hurrying the Censors. Although a work has been approved of, it is permitted to individuals, who conceive themselves injured by any passage in that work, to prosecute the author and editor.

8. The transgressors of this ordinance shall be punished by a fine of from five to sixty crowns, to be paid by any person printing or selling, without approbation, a book, in which there is nothing reprehensible. But if the work be reprehensible in itself, the whole edition shall be confiscated, and the printer shall be condemned to pay double the sum which he would have received for the impression; and the editor, if a native, to pay double the value of his whole edition, at the shop price. If the book-sellers are guilty of this offence for foreign editors, they shall be punished as the foreigner ought to be. In case of a repetition by a  
I printer



